

# *the* ARMENIAN REVIEW

**SPRING, 1954**

**SPECIAL**

**ORIGINAL TRANSLATIONS  
FROM DANIEL VAROUJEAN**

by  
Aram Tolegian

also

Reuben Darbinian  
Dr. George P. Rice, Jr.

Dr. Arshak Safrastian

Vardges Aharonian

P. K. Thomajan

Prof. Clarence Manning

Leon Surmelian

Armen Saninian

Hamasdegh

Krikor Zohrab

**"Armenian Life Abroad"**

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## THE ARMENIAN REVIEW

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**ARMENIAN REVIEW**

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# ARMENIAN REVIEW

VOLUME SEVEN, NUMBER 1 - 25

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## AFTER THE FALL OF BERIA

REUBEN DARBINIAN

### On the Soviet Internal Front

The confusion which followed Stalin's demise is being slowly cleared up not only inside the Soviet Union and the satellite countries, but also in the free world.

Inside the Soviet Union the fog started to lift from the day when Beria, one of Stalin's most powerful heirs, as a result of internal clashes behind the curtain, suddenly was declared a "traitor" and was eliminated. It is a noteworthy fact that, from that day, those hopeful breezes which had started to waft at least to outward appearances, came to an abrupt end. Ended were those public assurances in regard to the inviolability of the person and the safeguarding of the rights of the individual. Forgotten were those solemn promises that, thenceforth, all those who had breached the law, who had been guilty of arbitrary acts, who had tortured the prisoners in

order to extract from them involuntary and false confessions, would be severely punished.

The official statements that the severities of the Soviet laws soon would relent suddenly stopped. Nothing was heard about the vaunted general amnesty which had been officially proclaimed with so much noise and fanfare after Stalin's death, and no one knew how many of the prisoners in the prisons and the concentration camps really were freed. And Stalin's name which strangely enough seldom was mentioned after his death, was revived although not to the same extent as when he was alive.

The only change which continues to be pressed from Stalin's death to the present on the internal front are the feverish efforts to provide the people with a larger measure of the necessities of life, although even in this sphere the Soviet government is

more concerned with the improvement of the lot of those classes on whose loyalty the security of the Soviet regime rests, namely, the party and governmental bureaucracy and the army.

These efforts to satisfy these classes in some measure, so obvious and beyond question, stem from two considerations: first, the precarious position of the Soviet regime since the passing of Stalin; second, the Soviet agriculture in its present state is incapable of meeting even the minimum needs of the country.

The best remedy for the situation, of course, would be to make an end of the collectivist system of farming known as the Kolkhozes whose absolute bankruptcy has been proved long since, and to restore the system of private farming. But Stalin's heirs are reluctant to make use of this radical cure for fear of losing their control over the peasants. Once independent economically, the peasants naturally will become less reliable politically if not a positive threat to the tyrannical rule of their masters.

Another circumstance which compels Stalin's heirs to concentrate their attention on an accelerated agricultural production is the economic legacy, extremely dangerous for the regime, left over from the time of Stalin. Through his celebrated five-year plans, in trying to convert a primarily agricultural country into a highly developed industrial economy in the shortest possible time, in order to pursue his war aims, and later, by making an end of private agriculture and by launching the system of collective farming, Stalin actually undermined the foundations of sound agriculture and ruined the peasantry. The seasoned and comparatively prosperous farmer was liquidated or was doomed to a slow death in the steppes of Siberia. An important part of the peasantry, now deprived of all initiative, turned to the cities

to seek employment in factories. The peasantry which remained behind slowly lost all interest in village life because the Kolkhoz in which he was drafted offered no incentive for work as long as he no longer was the master of the product of his toil. To all such the lure of the city was irresistible. Should this condition continue unchecked the complete abandonment of the villages was inevitable.

It should be stated that, after the last war when Stalin still was alive, the Soviet Government made an effort to make the life of the peasants more attractive by increasing the size of the Kolkhoz with the semblance of large agricultural towns. This way the peasants would live just like the factory workers of the city. This plan, although dictated by strong political motives, undoubtedly was aimed to halt the steady exodus from the villages to the cities, and yet it failed to accomplish its original purpose due to the determined resistance of the peasants. It was after this failure that, when Stalin died, the Soviet government felt obliged to follow a milder policy toward the peasants. The peasants were allowed to set aside a little more of their produce for their private needs, to make life in the village a little more attractive, and they were given a greater incentive to increase their production to meet the needs of the cities.

Not satisfied with even this much, obviously unsure that these concessions would produce the expected results, the Soviet government saw fit to resort to its favorite weapon of force to bring about a large scale exodus from the cities to the villages and thus to bolster up a shaky agriculture. To this end tens of thousands of party or non-party operatives were railroaded from the cities to the agricultural areas.

By these measures, the Soviet government today is trying to restore the shaken

balance between the city and the village, and it wants to accomplish this without sacrificing an iota of those aims and purposes which govern the war industry. The aim is to stabilize the agriculture without impairing the flow of war production.

However, as long as the Soviet government does not relinquish its political plan of world conquest to which its entire economy is adjusted, as long as its main, if not sole, concern continues to remain the preservation and the perpetuation of its rule, the Soviet government shall never be able to make any tangible change in the improvement of its people. Driven by its intense preoccupation of preserving its rule at all cost, it cannot disengage the agricultural economy from the strangulating clutches of collectivism by restoring private ownership of the land — a measure which alone can induce the peasantry to maximum production.

The Soviet government has never cared, nor does it care today, that the vast multitudes under its rule have been reduced to a slow death by starvation. We may be certain that even now it would not be concerned about accelerating the agricultural production if, after the death of Stalin, it felt sure of its position and if it had no fear of an eventual explosion of the accumulated discontent in the army and the state and party bureaucracy.

It is obvious that the vast bureaucracy and the army officers of the Soviet Union are dissatisfied with their present life which is so full of privations and who are insistent on a modicum of decent life, including food, clothing, and the common everyday necessities of life. The heirs of Stalin, to entrench their positions, are obliged to give serious consideration to this situation. But, to do this even in a modest measure, the peasants must produce more than they are producing at present, and impetus must be given to the small industries alongside

the major. In view of the fact that the chief concern of Stalin's heirs is not the broad masses of the people but the contentment of the party and state bureaucracy and the army, we can readily see that this much of the task can be accomplished through half measures.

As to the multitude of the slaves who constitute the overwhelming majority of the people and who inside or outside the concentration camps ever since the beginning of the Soviet regime have been dragging a half starved existence, Stalin's heirs never give them a thought. It is not the people they are afraid of, but the party and state bureaucracy and the army officers who uphold their present power.

### **The Triumph of Great-Russian Nazism**

Until Beria's fall, on the internal front, it seemed Stalin's heirs made an effort partly to satisfy the non-Russian nationalities of the Soviet Union by removing at least the semblance of Great-Russian domination. It was for this reason that in Ukraine, Georgia, and a few other Soviet republics rabid champions of Great-Russia who occupied important positions were replaced by the local representatives of non-Russian nationalities.

Apparently it was thought that, by catering to the nationalistic pride of the non-Russians who constituted more than half of the population of the Soviet Union, it would be easier to restore the solidity of the Soviet regime which had been shaken by the death of Stalin. From all indications, Beria was a firm believer in that policy which he obviously supported from personal considerations as well.

After the elimination of Beria, Stalin's heirs relinquished this policy and returned to the policy of Great-Russian supremacy. They apparently were afraid that, if they followed the policy of Beria, they would incite the hostility of the Great-Russian, and

on the other hand they would encourage secessionist tendencies on the part of non-Russians, something which they did not want especially because, with the elimination of Beria, all the rest were fanatical exponents of Great-Russian supremacy.

It was not a vain gesture, for example, that when after the termination of the last war, in a banquet in honor of his military and civil associates, Stalin devoted his toast to a eulogy of the Great-Russian nation, ascribing to it the lion's share of the victory. And this tribute was not altogether unfounded, inasmuch as, the non-Russian nationalities of the Soviet Union, while forced to make gigantic sacrifices for the fatherland, nevertheless were not inclined to fight the enemy, and actually did help the enemy in the beginning days of the war by mass desertions and capitulation. They stopped aiding the enemy only after they saw that after being liberated from Stalin's monstrous rule, they were being subjected to a no less exacting monster. And if it were not for the support of the Great-Russians, Stalin's despotism assuredly would have been shattered despite the enemy's revolting atrocities.

That the non-Russian soldiers of the Red Army showed little enthusiasm in the war was obvious from the stories of the prisoners and those who had found refuge in free countries. These stories clearly prove the contempt with which the Great-Russian officers treated the non-Russians, especially the soldiers and the officers of Caucasian nationalities whom they insulted with the Turkish word "*Yoldash*" uttered in a tone of contempt.

That the international communism of the initial years had been converted in the Soviet Union into a sort of Great-Russian Nazism or Fascism was made perfectly apparent at the end of the Second World War. Not only the enforced glorification of the Great-Russian nation is being propa-

gated among the non-Russians with unprecedented force, but along with the political supremacy, stress is being laid on the cultural supremacy of the Great-Russians. The Great-Russian nation is being presented by the bigwigs of the Kremlin as the "Big Brother," the "Benefactor," and the "Protector" of the non-Russian nationalities whom they must follow and emulate in all fields of activity.

Apparently it was on this score that a violent clash took place between Beria and the rest of Stalin's heirs, which also partly accounts for Beria's elimination. Obviously Beria violently opposed the extreme nationalism of his associates.

If, during the few months immediately following Stalin's death, a slight relaxation was made in favor of the non-Russian, today, with the removal of Beria, such a deviation has been decidedly removed and the supremacy of the Great-Russian nation has been reestablished in the person of Malenkov, Molotov and Khrushchev.

The outstanding development in international life today is the fact that the German concept of the super race has been succeeded by the Nazism of the Great-Russian as a mortal threat to the freedom of the nations and the world peace.

### Half Measures for the Improvement of Agriculture

As regards the peoples of the satellite countries, to ensure the safety of their position which had been rudely shaken as a result of their leader's death, Stalin's heirs thought it wise to relax somewhat the former pressure. This meant a greater degree of economic freedom, the tolerance of small industry, a minimum of restriction on private agriculture, and a more tolerant attitude toward the church and national cultures. In short, this was a recession similar to the one Lenin executed in Soviet Russia after the rebellion of Kronstadt in 1921. Specifically, broad concessions were pro-

mised to Hungary and eastern Germany.

The general aim of these concessions was to attract the nationalist elements of the satellite countries, meet the requirements of their peoples, and thus to gain time until Stalin's heirs felt secure enough to rescind them and to return to a sterner policy of sovietization much the same as Stalin had done in regard to Lenin's celebrated "New Economic Policy."

Unexpected events, however, forced the Soviet leaders to change the abovementioned policy. First came the heroic uprising of East German workers against the Soviet regime. There were uprisings in Czechoslovakia. Signs of intense dissatisfaction were seen in other satellite countries. And Stalin's heirs were afraid that, if they followed the milder policy they had planned, they would be confronted with a serious situation, being forced to use the Red army in order to save the regime much the same as they did in East Germany, proving to the world that Communist regimes can be maintained only by Russian bayonets.

After this initial experiment Stalin's heirs put the blame of their failure on Beria, making him the scapegoat, and promptly returned to the stern policy of Stalin's days.

It cannot be said for sure, of course, that having removed Beria, Stalin's heirs are rigidly following now the latter's policy. Certain changes are perceptible especially in the field of agriculture as seen inside the Soviet Union. There is an effort to ease the economic pressure in satellite countries and to placate the bureaucracy and the army officers of these countries much the same as it is being done inside the Soviet Union.

And yet, those slight concessions which they have made give no indication of a radical departure from Stalin's policy in favor of private agriculture. What is more, these restrictions in no wise have relaxed

the political restrictions and the terroristic system which prevail in the Soviet orbit.

It is quite true that, faced with the obvious and incontrovertible bankruptcy of the collectivist system (Kolkhoz), Malenkov and his colleagues were even obliged to make some public and quite unexpected admissions, and for this reason they move more slowly and more cautiously in the satellite countries. Without doubt they would be willing to abandon the collectivist system and return to private agriculture if they were not haunted by the specter of its grim political consequences. If they did not know it before, today they are convinced that the collectivist system is a failure as an economic experiment and is solely responsible for the woeful condition of agriculture throughout the Soviet Union.

In the face of all this, the reason why Soviet leaders cling to the present system of an economically bankrupt agriculture is purely political. They are afraid that an independent peasantry will never become subservient like the collectivist peasantry whose condition is no different from the factory worker. Both classes depend on the same master, the Soviet power which controls the entire economy of the Soviet Union.

When we consider that Stalin's heirs, like their deceased leader, are mainly concerned with the preservation of their dictatorial power, something which has become a question of life or death for them, it becomes plain that they will never introduce, nor can introduce, any radical reforms in the country's agriculture which will gradually lead to private economy as long as such a step will hurt them politically.

This explains why the heirs of Stalin cannot, nor ever will be able to go beyond the limit of half measures in the solution of the agricultural problem. The most they



will be able to do is to improve in some measure the economic condition of the bureaucracy and the army officers.

### Return to Policy of Stalin

When immediately after Stalin's death his heirs showed some signs of relaxation, made some minor concessions, and toned down their language toward the West, making believe that there was no dispute or problem which could not be resolved by peaceful negotiation and mutual agreement with the West, including even the United States, many in the free world naively believed that the prevailing international tension would at last be lifted, and an end would be made to the so-called cold war, and the menace of a Third World War would be removed, thus making possible the peaceful coexistence of the two conflicting world camps. Even such shrewd and tested statesmen like Sir Winston Churchill were carried away by their optimism and stubbornly insisted on a meeting of the Big Four as soon as possible in order to insure the world peace.

Up until Beria's fall perhaps slight illusions in this respect were pardonable. Stalin's heirs who needed a truce with the free world in order to resolve their internal problems and to consolidate their shaky position, conceivably could really have been interested in such a truce. But after Beria's fall the behavior of Stalin's heirs put an end to these vague illusions. Resumed were the erstwhile wanton attacks on the West, especially the United States, both in the Soviet press and in the councils of the United Nations. Resumed were the crudities and the shameless falsehoods of Stalin's days in their diplomatic exchanges. In response to the West's countless appeals for peace treaties with Austria and Germany, Stalin's heirs hemmed and hawed and thwarted a meeting of the Big Four with conditions which were absolutely unacceptable. And, with their communication

of November 3 permanently buried any hope of a compromise even in regard to the solution of Austrian and German problems.

But when Stalin's heirs saw that their negative attitude, far from preventing the organization of the European army from promoting disunion among the free West, on the contrary contributed to their enhanced solidarity, they sprung up a new play from their bag of tricks by agreeing to a meeting of the four foreign ministers as a means of relaxing the international tension and resolving their differences with the free West.

That this was but a new trick, and that there was no serious intention of coming to an amicable understanding with the West was clearly seen by the Soviet's latest communication (November 28) so replete with the old and hackneyed accusations, leaving no doubt that the Soviet has not abandoned her unacceptable conditions, the only difference being that these demands were not presented as a pre-condition of the purported meeting but as aims to be pursued in the future.

That the attitude of Stalin's successors is as unyielding toward the West as was Stalin's once again was made apparent by the absolutely repellant and even hostile attitude which they showed toward President Eisenhower's constructive and generous propositions in regard to the peaceful exploitation of atomic energy before the United Nations Assembly. Only under the pressure of world opinion and for propaganda reasons they changed their attitude and agreed to consider President Eisenhower's plan.

Fortunately, the Western leaders, having learned their lesson from the bitter experience of the past, received this latest trick with extreme reserve and even suspicion, and although they agreed not to refuse the belated consent to a meeting of the Big

Four, they did so with all due precaution lest the perfidious enemy used the occasion to disrupt their unity. To this end, the heads of the three great Western powers held a preliminary meeting in Bermuda in order to resolve their differences and to present a united front in the meeting in Berlin.

Besides, the Big Three took steps to prepare the world opinion to prevent any exaggerated hopes in the meeting, lest, in case of failure which was very probable, not to say inevitable, there would be no great disappointment. The Berlin Conference itself showed that the Big Three was wise to have prepared public world opinion for negative results at Berlin.

In this connection it is pertinent to observe that a number of distinguished government leaders and columnists in Europe and America who although have abandoned their former notions of a peaceful settlement of world problems, have nevertheless surrendered themselves to a new type of illusion. While convinced that the present Soviet government is still unprepared for making any radical concessions to the solution of world problems, such as the questions of Austria, Germany, Indo-China and Korea, nevertheless they are inclined to believe that the Soviet is likely to relax the present tension by calling a temporary truce to the "cold war." A meeting of the Big Four, the thing which Churchill has been demanding ever since last May, therefore, was found both useful and necessary.

It is quite true that when Churchill delivered his historic speech last May he was more optimistic than later. But the very fact that he still stubbornly insisted on such a meeting was proof enough that this was not a mere surrender to the pressure of public opinion but that he still cherished positive expectations from such a meeting.

In all probability, the conviction that the Soviet is sincerely reluctant to go so far

as to precipitate a Third World War is not altogether baseless, because Stalin's successors know very well that in a major war they may lose not only their power but their heads as well. But it is not true, nor can ever be true that they will really wish to stop the cold war which is so necessary for the realization of their world plans and at the same time poses no threat either to their power or heads.

It must never be forgotten that the chief means of materializing the world revolution which has been the life goal of Lenin and Stalin and their successors is the cold war which is nothing but a conspiracy against the democratic order of the free world. Abandoning such a weapon is out of the question because their very lives and the preservation of their dictatorship depends upon the continued existence of the cold war.

### Two Immediate Aims Pursued by the Soviet

It is not inconceivable, of course, that Stalin's heirs will make solemn promises in regard to the peace. It is not inconceivable that they would conclude peace treaties with the western powers presumably to ease off the present tension. They might even make some minor specious concessions. And they will do so, no doubt, if they only can further insure the safety of their conquests to date, if only they can lull the nations into sleep for a while longer. If only they can disarm them psychologically and partly militarily.

And yet, it is imperative that the West be always on guard. First, as it has been said countless times, the Soviet has never been used to respect its international commitments, and therefore, its signature is not worth the cost of the paper of the treaties. Second, any treaty which the Soviet would sign will always be to its advantage, but never to the advantage of its opponent, because a treaty has no binding

effect on the Soviet whereas the opponent feels restricted by its provisions.

Third, any new treaty with the Soviet will weaken the West's defense preparations, and by creating the illusion of peace, will lull the peoples of the West into sleep, will debilitate their vigilance, and will impair their capacity to resist the enemy's external attack and internal subversion.

Unfortunately, during the past year the moulders of public opinion in the West have promoted among the masses the naive hope that a meeting with the Soviet leaders will be enough to engender a peaceful understanding on all or at least some standing international problems.

It is true that those who stubbornly cherished such a hope themselves were fast losing their optimism. But public opinion in the West whipped to such extent in favor of such a meeting that the Western powers felt constrained by the public pressure, despite their inner convictions, to agree to a meeting with the Soviet leaders.

By their unyielding pursuit of Stalin's imperialistic designs, his successors obviously are striving to resolve two highly essential questions in order to make new conquests. And they want to accomplish this without direct resort to arms because they are afraid that if they should use their armies in any part of the world just now, the result will not be another local war like Korea, but will precipitate a world war, something which, at least for the present, they wish to avoid as long as they are not sure that they will win the war.

What are those twin aims which the Soviet leaders now strive to attain? First, by all possible means short of war, they want to prevent the military, political and economic unity of Western Europe. They know very well that if Western Europe organizes such a union, not only they will be unable to make new conquests, but they

will be unable to retain their hold on eastern Europe.

First, they tried to prevent the European Defence Community by overt threats, as seen by their communication of November 3 which was a diplomatic warning to the three big western powers. And when their veiled threat came to naught, they came forth with a new proposition, the meeting of the four foreign ministers in Berlin.

One would have been unpardonably naive indeed to conclude from this new proposition that Stalin's heirs really wished to come to an understanding with the West based on mutual concessions. Their purpose, undoubtedly, was nothing else but to prevent the organization of the European army as reinforced by German contingents. They wanted to prevent the political and economic unity of Western Europe. The nearer this unity came to realization, the more desperate the Soviet became in its efforts to stop it.

The second burning question which the Soviet wants to resolve as soon as possible pertains to the Far East. The Soviet wants to consolidate and to secure the existence of Red China by all means, and to accomplish this, it resorts to all possible means to force the three big powers of the West to recognize China officially, to accept her as the fifth great power, and to agree to sit with her not only in consultations pertaining to the East but in the solution of western problems as well.

Stalin's heirs understand very well, of course, that as long as Communist China is not recognized by the United States, as long as she has no seat in the United Nations, as long as the United States recognizes the government of Nationalist China as the legitimate representative in the United Nations Assembly, and lastly, as long as the United States extends military and



economic aid to Nationalist China which is established in Formosa and that government with its imposing military power poses a perpetual threat to Communist China, such a situation not only will endanger the continued existence of Communist China but will actually retard her future conquests in Asia.

By the same logic, those very cogent reasons which compel Stalin's successors to persist in pressing the cause of Red China everywhere and on every occasion, compel, and should compel the Western powers, the United States in particular, to obstruct the recognition, the consolidation and the participation in international councils by Red China. The only exception should be those transactions which have to do with the Korean truce and the political conference for the simple reason that Red China was actually at war, and having concluded an armistice at least shows an official disposition to conclude a peace treaty.

Apparently, the West, Europe in particular, does not fully realize how important it is for the freedom and the peace of the world that the Communist regime in China should never be allowed to consolidate and perpetuate itself. Fortunately, the present leaders of the United States government and especially the Republican leaders in Congress fully realize that if Communist China is recognized and its perpetuity insured, it will be impossible to rescue the remaining countries of Asia which to date have managed to escape the clutches of Communism. It is needless to say that if the whole of Asia is engulfed in the Communist tide, the Soviet dictators will have at their disposal such a formidable force which will require unprecedented efforts bordering on suicide on the part of the free West to be able to maintain its existence not only in Western Europe but in America as well.

### The Mute Struggle For the Succession

Having eliminated Beria, Stalin's victorious heirs are pursuing now his policies, internal and external, with all the more resolution. This does not necessarily mean, of course, that all their differences have been resolved or that the struggle for the power among them has come to an end. If we were to judge from surface appearances we would have to admit that, after Beria's fall, perfect harmony reigns in the Kremlin. But such an impression was true, or could have been true with equal force when Beria still was one of the Soviet dictators.

Appearances on the Soviet Olympus are always deceptive. Indeed, who could have thought that, scarcely four months after Stalin's death, one of his mightiest heirs, Beria, could be toppled so quickly and so ingloriously, without any warning sign? Today also all the signs point up a perfect harmony, but who can confidently say that, behind the Kremlin's thick curtains, there is not a relentless struggle for the power among Stalin's remaining heirs? Who can say that one of them does not aspire to become the sole master of the Soviet world as was Stalin? Who can say for sure that in the near future Molotov, Khrushchev, or Malenkov himself will not be the next to share Beria's fate just as suddenly and without warning?

If history teaches any one thing, and if the course of events has a logic, it is quite possible to admit, and we must admit that with the removal of Beria the fight for the power did not come to an end in the Kremlin, and that the struggle is being continued in the dark, pregnant with sensational surprises which may have fateful consequences not only on the Soviet Union but on the whole world.

That the fight for the power is not over is seen by the recent purge of Andrianov, a high ranking Communist leader of the

Leningrad region, under the direction of Khrushchev who is one of Kremlin's most powerful dictators. This purge is all the more significant when we consider that only a year ago Andrianov had been elected to the Central Committee of the USSR Communist Party and was appointed supreme ruler of Russia's second capital at the behest of Stalin himself. The fact that Khrushchev himself, personally went to Leningrad to execute the purge goes to prove that the fight for the power still continues inside the Kremlin and no one can as yet say where and how it will end.

Recent news dispatches speak of sensational purges in Soviet Armenia, Georgia, Ukraina and Moldavia.

There can be no doubt that the collective dictatorship which replaced Stalin's personal dictatorship cannot last long. Stalin's heirs — be they three, four, five or ten —, after having removed their most dangerous rival, cannot sit still and feel secure as long as any of them is liable to share Beria's fate. For this reason the mute struggle will go on in the dark until one or the other succeeds in seizing the power, as did Stalin, by destroying his rivals one after another.

No one, of course, can say that one of Stalin's heirs will necessarily be as clever, daring and lucky to be able finally to take Stalin's place without precipitating violent internal upheavals as did Stalin with such masterful manipulation. The amazingly swift, and to all external appearances so easy elimination of a dangerous rival like Beria would seem to indicate, indeed, that Stalin's pupils are not far behind their master and perhaps they shall excel him. And yet, there is no reason to believe that the purges of Beria and his associates will be able to neutralize one another with such ease and success until one of them emerges the victor.

Immediately after Stalin's death many

thought that Beria occupied the most powerful post among his successors, and therefore, was the most dangerous rival of all. Without doubt he himself believed that he would be the one to succeed Stalin. And yet, despite his initial successes, he was defeated by his colleagues with surprising ease and swiftness.

How this happened no one can say for certainty, but as to the why? there are many probabilities.

First of all, as head of the Cheka for long years under whose rule millions had been incarcerated, tortured, exiled or executed, Beria had become the most hated symbol of Soviet terror, not only in the eyes of the people but the ruling classes, namely, the members of the Communist Party and State bureaucracies, and the officers of the army, none of whom had been exempt from the chase of his hound dogs. Beria, naturally, could not be regarded as the desirable person for the dictatorial post, especially since he had done nothing to attract a formidable force on which he could rely.

Apparently, Beria realized this to a certain extent. Apparently, it was largely due to his insistence that a number of significant steps were taken with a view to appeasing the masses of the Soviet Union, especially the ruling classes.

Thus, in his speeches after Stalin's death more than anyone else Beria tried to assure the public that there would be no more arbitrary arrests, and no more tortures of the prisoners. And to make his "sincerity" even more convincing Beria did an unprecedented thing. He freed the physicians who, at the order of Stalin, had been imprisoned for allegedly having poisoned Communist leaders and generals and were preparing to poison others. Moreover, and what was really unexpected, he issued an official statement giving the physicians a clean slate, that they had been imprisoned

without due process of law, and that their false confessions had been extracted by torture. Meanwhile, Beria arrested those Chekists who were responsible for the abovementioned illegal procedure. Besides, as known, a general amnesty was proclaimed for all prisoners, accompanied with a solemn promise to relax the severity of punitive laws.

It seems Beria also made special efforts to win the peasantry to which end he is said to have proposed important concessions for the improvement of agriculture.

Lastly, Beria made special efforts to win over the non-Russian nationalities, trying to remove the most crying manifestations of Great-Russian supremacy, but here, too, he miscalculated, and this is the reason why.

In 1917-1918 Lenin tried to win over the non-Russian nationalities by promising them independence, and even the right to secede from Russia. That policy (although illusory, as later events proved) helped the Communists to seize and consolidate their power. Today, however, the non-Russians cannot play the same role as we shall see.

In 1917-1918 the whole of Russia was in a chaotic condition and the Central government was not sufficiently organized. In particular, it lacked a regular army. Under such circumstances the non-Russian nationalities, motivated by their national interests, could be of some help to Lenin, especially since, at least in words, he was the most generous of all Russian factions in meeting the national aspirations of the various nationalities of Russia, and therefore, could easily mislead many. But today the Krem-

lin's power is vastly more organized and centralized at the hands of Great-Russian Nazis who long since have abandoned the international or cosmopolitan airs which used to prevail in the days of Lenin and his associates. Naturally, the Great-Russian Nazis hidden under the name of Communist could not very well tolerate, even temporarily, the slight concessions which Beria wanted to make in favor of non-Russian nationalities.

Beria's Georgian origin was another thing which was intolerable for his colleagues of the Great-Russian super-race group, now entrenched in the Kremlin. If, by the force of events, they had been constrained to endure the dictatorship of Stalin which had been established, despite their will, in a different psychological atmosphere, the thought of the supremacy of a second Georgian, under the present circumstances, was absolutely abhorrent and intolerable to them.

Be that as it may, while Beria lost his fight, his victorious colleagues on the other hand have not yet solved the problem of total dictatorship which like a Damoclean sword hangs over their heads, and which can be solved more or less satisfactorily only when the present collective dictatorship is replaced by the personal, autocratic dictatorship of one who, like Stalin, may emerge either from their ranks or outside their ranks.

Just when and how this may happen, or whether the part can ever be duplicated, or what course the mute struggle for the power in the Kremlin will take, no one can predict. The answer of these fateful questions lies only in the future.



# THE WRONG PORTRAIT

KRIKOR ZOHRAB

(1861-1915)

I used to hate this woman, but why? I did not know. The perpetual frown on her face, the sullen look, the puckered forehead and the tight lips, dripping with scorn used to exasperate me every time I met her on the street. As if I was a woman chaser, or, for that matter, as if the whole world was after her, which she sensed and clearly surmised, she would seek refuge behind that impenetrable wall of her worried look, ready to stop you from uttering the honeyed words you had so carefully prepared.

This mute antagonism between the two of us steadily grew. I did not really know her, but I could clearly read the scornful expression on her face, a persistent and incomprehensible hostility which steadily grew without any cause or provocation on my part.

What did this woman really want of me? The question deeply oppressed me, so much so, I felt she might insult me any time, shouting in my face in a shrill voice if ever the occasion arrived. In the ferry or on the bridge she would size me up from head to foot, shrinking me in one look, making me feel so small.

I had an infinite desire to know her more closely, a supreme passion which tortured me. I pretended to reconstruct her entire life. I wanted to know her without asking a single question of anyone, and after completing the portrait of my imagination, I wanted to compare it with the real thing. Thus, I became a sort of second Providence, capable of creating entirely new creatures and their settings. to make men

live, cry and laugh, a rival Providence competing with the real Providence.

And this is the way I fancied her. She should have been thirty-five, no more nor less, neither a foolish young woman, nor a discontented housewife, neither a hope nor a memory, looked neither to the past nor the future. She should belong only to the present.

I wanted her to be a married woman. Why? Perhaps because a married person already embraces the unmarried in him, and it was my will that this woman should be lacking in nothing. I wanted her to be married so that I could speak freely with her, boldly, almost unabashed.

She should be a woman of good taste who would know how to hold her parasol, to have a small lovely shoe, showing her silk with the shuffle of her footstep, capable of condensing the charm of a half hour conversation in a casual nod of the head.

She should not know either to read or write, oh no, never! She should be one who trusted only her tongue, whose very voice was a symphony in itself, and her words a whole poem, without her knowing it.

My supreme concern was whether I should give this woman a heart or not. There was so much to think about on this point, pro and con. To give her a heart and make her unhappy? Or not to give her a heart and make all who met her unhappy, — a double edged sword which baffled my newly-created role of Providence. Here was a clash between individual and public interests, alas, with no chance of solution.

What the heck! Let her go without a heart just so she is happy. Who cared if the world might be deceived by her charms, might tremble and writhe in pain, might be tortured and reduced to a queen of ruins whose dust and ashes would tremble with joy every time this woman passed by.

On the lower deck of the steamboat, in the spacious salon where was located the ship's engine, seated there on the sofa, I was watching this woman opposite me, trying to reconstruct her like a foolish sculptor, chiseling, retouching it, making additions or revisions to the image of my mind. My feverish mind, keeping in tune with the rhythmic pounding of the powerful engines, was busily at work with an energy which seemed inexhaustable. I decided to leave alone that lovely full face just the way as it was, leave alone her black gown. I did not touch the lacework of her hat which caressed her golden tresses.

After completing the image, I had to create a husband and a home for her. A husband for this woman? I regretted now foisting a husband on this creature who was mine, which my hand had preserved intact in the charm of its virgin beauty.

The steamboat kept plowing through the waters, filling my ears with its incessant din. The woman was sullen as ever, and I, who wished her so much good, who was so deeply involved probing the depths of her life, the darkest corners, I who, through such painful exertions had assumed so many privileges and rights over her fate, kept watching her without uttering a word as a shaft of the flame from the ship's furnace played upon her yellow tresses and gave a rosy glow to her pale cheeks.

I felt an irresistible urge to speak to her and say to her: "Please, Madame, don't feel so bitter. A sweet smile would be more becoming to your beautiful face. I see you are lonely, permit me to speak with you and

dispel your sorrow." All this I wanted to speak out loud.

One after another, we left behind the ship's stations: Hissar, Boyajikeoy. Assuredly she would get off at Yenimohalleh, leaving me behind to ascend the Beyoukdereh, and thus to abandon my handiwork half-completed.

When the ferry arrived at Beyoukdereh reluctantly I rose to get off, but, to my surprise, she too got up to leave. Quite by accident the two of us walked side by side. At the wharf I turned to my right, following an arborway. As I looked behind me I saw that she was following me with a delicate gait which took away all the hatred which was in me. So graceful, so natural and so enchanting was she that I felt I had miserably failed in my feeble effort of reconstructing her image. Finally, I stopped in front of a house where I had been called for a judicial consultation which involved the honor and the entire fortune of the family, and behold, the woman joined in front of the same door.

When we got inside we were introduced to each other. She was a member of the family which had hired my services as lawyer in their litigation. Around the table cluttered with documents, official summons in Turkish letters and sealed with the official seal, there we consulted together, seeking a way of saving the endangered fortune of the family, and presently, the severity on her face was softened. She turned to me with a beseeching look while I continued to shuffle the papers and ask questions. Finally I turned to her.

"You have left your husband. Is that right, Madame?"

"Yes."

"How old were you when you signed this paper?"

"I was scarcely fourteen. I was not of age. I did not know what I was signing."

"Have you no children?"



"No, we separated in less than a year. My husband was the cause of all my misfortunes."

I subjected her to a rigorous examination, just like any one else, gloating over my revenge for the accumulated curiosity which had tortured me for so many years. So, she was unhappy, she had married only to taste the bitterness of marriage and now she was dragging her marital corpse like a prisoner's chain, while yonder their family fortune was in danger of being wiped out by ruthless litigation.

Providence had not dealt with this woman as I would have done. Her beauty, her stature, her age and charm had had no effect upon it. Providence had not discriminated in behalf of this woman's common calamities and misfortune.

Later when I took charge of the case and became intimately acquainted with the family, one day I told her the story of my impossible dream of playing the role of

Providence over her. And I learned that all this time this woman had been wrapped up with her worries over her suit and the dread of losing her sole means of livelihood. That was the reason why she had severed herself from the world.

The sullenness stamped on her face which I had tried so hard to analyze, to which I had given such poetic proportions, which I had magnified in my mind, was nothing but the result of her worry over a simple suit.

"You must win this case by all means," she would repeat every time she saw me.

This case was her sole preoccupation. She lived by it day and night, the only concern which nourished and sustained her. The court's summons, the sentence, the litigation, that was the topic of her conversation all the time. And I, who in my providential role, had destined her for a happy fate, seeing her dire straits for insuring the security of a common livelihood, had nothing but pity for this unfortunate woman.



# V. Political and Civil Liberty in the U.S.: The Student and Free Speech and Assembly<sup>1</sup>

GEORGE P. RICE, JR.

Intelligent, responsible, and effective public opinion is a *sine qua non* in a nation dedicated to government by and for the people. Its place as a force in politics is at least as old as the Age of Homer. "Thus would a man speak, with a glance at his neighbor." The statesmen-orators who drafted the federal constitution and bill of rights also placed a very high value on free communication of ideas. The Revolution had taught them the usefulness of speech and press in the process of persuading men to action or belief. So they surrounded speech, assembly, and press with careful immunities, expressed or implied, in the Preamble and Constitution in the First, Fifth, and Fourteenth Amendments. As a result, the political climate of the United States has been friendly to free public discussion for nearly two hundred years. Until quite recently legislators and judges experienced no special difficulties in balancing the community interest in security, order, and peace against the individual's exercise of his right to speak. There was a general assumption that men wanted to know truth, and that truth would triumph in open competition with error in a market where sellers of ideas are numerous and their wares varied.

The menace of Communism and the ac-

tivities of its agents of subversion have had a profound effect upon the interpretation of constitutional and statutory provisions controlling speech and assembly. The security of the nation has made necessary a good deal of protective legislation designed to cope with the danger. This legislation in turn has been enforced in the courts. Imposition of certain restrictions upon speech and assembly has been unavoidable.

What is the public reaction to the new laws? to decisions of courts made under their authority? Answers to these questions are difficult to obtain. A few questions dealing with speech and assembly have been prepared by the American Institute of Public Opinion in recent years (1945 and 1954) and the answers published. But there has been no systematic effort to ascertain important information concerning attitudes and values toward speech and assembly from significant numbers of any one segment of American public opinion. The writer has sought to assist in the accumulation of such data by polling college students for their reactions.

The college student is an important, active, and traditionally vocal part of the contemporary scene. He is interested in public discussion of issues of the day furnished him by classes and societies designed to encourage his study of the technique of controversy. From the ranks of such

<sup>1</sup> This is the fifth in a series of articles by Dr. Rice on this subject.

students come the politicians, teachers, writers, businessmen, and others of stamp and status in their communities who are expected to be well informed and to have opinions to express. What the age group 17-26 thinks today may well be the prevailing climate of opinion tomorrow. With these considerations in mind a group of 1000 graduate and undergraduate students in New York and Indiana were polled on a questionnaire of 17 problems devoted to speech and assembly. There were 200 graduate and 800 undergraduates represented. Of the total (it fell by chance) 301 were women and 699 were men. A wide range of curricular interest was included: law, engineering, liberal arts, home economics, agriculture, business and commerce, and teacher training. Direct and truthful reactions were sought by allowing the students to remain anonymous. Five colleges in Indiana, (Indiana University School of Law, Purdue University, Wabash, De Pauw University, and Butler University), furnished 500 sets of answers. The balance came from New York: Cornell, City College of New York, Albany Law School of Union University, Russell Sage College, and the New York State College for Teachers at Albany. Over 95 per cent of those answering had studied public speaking or were studying it when the poll was taken. All of the undergraduate schools polled have public speaking as a required course for graduation, or as a preferred elective. It appears that one in three students at each has the benefit of instruction in public speaking before graduation. The findings reported, here, then, may be claimed to be representative of classes in public speaking in the schools named, and possibly may indicate the trend for college students in both states at this time.

The public at large and the teaching profession in particular have an important interest in the answers to such questions as

these: Is the average college student suitably informed concerning state and federal constitutional protection of his right to free legal speech and assembly? Does he feel too much restraint has been placed upon speech by statutes such as the Smith Act, certain provisions of the Taft-Hartley Act, and the McCarran Act? Does he read and understand recent United States Supreme Court decisions involving speech and assembly issues? Does he agree with them? Is he willing to permit discretionary control of his speech by public officials? What value does he place on the right of free speech today? What controls guide his utterance most often and effectively?

The seventeen questions by which the students were polled sought evidence of attitudes and values toward speech by concentrating upon four areas of information: (a) the student's educational and factual background on constitutional matters controlling speech and assembly; (b) his awareness of the effect of habit, conscience, public opinion, and law as speech controls; (c) the relative value he placed upon the right to speak and assemble; and (d) the extent of his agreement with key decisions of the United States Supreme Court in speech and assembly cases.

Some significant attitudes and trends are reported here:

1. Only 3 of 10 students knew enough about local government to be aware of state constitutional provisions for public discussion.

2. Mid-western students were appreciably better informed on this point than were their peers in the East.

3. But 8 of every 10 students were aware of the relevant portions of the federal Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

4. Only 5 out of 10 students had read recent United States Supreme Court decisions affecting speech and assembly.

5. Students of the larger metropolitan



universities and colleges were much better informed about Court decisions.

6. Habit and conscience exercised a much greater restraint upon the speech of the students than did public opinion or law.

7. Most (8 of 10) felt no excessive restraints had been imposed by law upon their speech.

8. Amazingly, 12 per cent did not place a "high" value upon freedom of speech when asked to choose among categories labelled "high," "much," and "little."

9. A remarkable independence of mind was manifested when only 16 per cent were willing to accept administrative discretionary control of their speech in a peacetime emergency.

10. Over 70 per cent accepted the Court's decisions in problems involving speech and assembly.

11. There was no significant difference in the answers of the 200 graduate students in law (mostly first and second year men) and the 800 undergraduates.

12. In general more women students appeared better informed on matters of fact than men, while the men manifested more independence of judgment in answering questions where that quality could be expressed.

These findings permit certain inferences, some good and some bad, insofar as an informed and intelligent public opinion exists in selected colleges on matters concerning freedom of speech and assembly.

On the credit side of the ledger one may enter these things: college students in very substantial numbers know the federal Constitution's protections for certain civil liberties; they possess considerable indepen-

dence of mind in accepting outside controls of their speech; their strong support (independently determined upon) of Court's decisions involving speech and assembly issues argues well for the effective administration of the new legislation designed to establish necessary restraints. But the student's account must be debited with several important items: he does not read newspapers sufficiently nor with proper discrimination; instruction in local government is apparently insufficiently stressed; 12 per cent of the 1000 responders, or 120 students, most of whom are currently studying public speaking, do not place a "high" value on that activity.

A few other trends, useful in nature, were apparent: the tendency of the metropolitan student to be better informed and to place a higher value on free public discussion than his peer at a smaller and more isolated school; the much greater degree of tolerance exhibited by this age group (17-26) on questions wherein permission to be heard was granted speakers whose views were repugnant to the student, as compared to older test groups similarly quizzed.

Most important of all is the emergence of a special opportunity for the speech profession to do good and useful civic service. This involves an addition to the corpus of its course of study: to the traditional stress on *what* to say and *how* to say it should be added instruction in the *way* of public address.

Public opinion on many levels needs to be explored and the data made available to those in whose charge is the making and direction of American policy. One of the most important points for investigation is the frontier where speech and law meet.



# THE SOVIET NATIONALITIES PROBLEM

PROF. CLARENCE A. MANNING

All students of Communism, whether they are friendly or hostile, whether they are inside or outside of the Iron Curtain, fall into two groups. There are those who see in Communism a definite philosophy and economic system which spreads because of its promises to the oppressed and downtrodden people of the world, and which can be opposed by a counter-philosophy and a change in living conditions. The second group, while it may recognize the importance of this aspect, yet sees in the advance of the Soviet Union a grim and ruthless extension of that policy which led the armies of the tsar of Moscow to the shores of the Baltic and the Black Sea, the realms of Central Asia and the shores of the Pacific Ocean, and which created the Russian Empire with its avowed principle of compulsory russification, or in modern phraseology, the recognition of the Great Russians as the elder brothers of all the peoples of the Soviet Union and the satellite states. Any questioning of this incurs the charge of bourgeois nationalism and the desire to alienate brother peoples. Sooner or later both groups are compelled to take account of the nationalities problem in one form or another.

Yet there is no aspect of Soviet life and thought that has received less study and found less sympathetic understanding than this same nationalities problem. Even today the political and intellectual leaders of the free world are neglecting it and they do not realize how closely the problems of

the non-Russian Soviet republics approach those of the satellite states which are undergoing merely the first stages of russification and Communization. There are many reasons for this.

Western Europe, and by that we mean roughly the area west of the Rhine-Danube line, has through the centuries acquired a definite geographical form. Two World Wars have scarcely changed the national boundaries and the elimination of the Empire of the Hapsburgs and the liberation of the Christians from the European part of the Ottoman Empire have aided in the extension of this area. East of that line there was the Russian Empire, Russia, and now the Soviet Union. Yet to the great majority of the Western peoples there is still the one Russia and the one Russian people.

That people are the people who produced Russian literature, the literature of Turgenyev, of Tolstoy and of Dostoyevsky, of Chekhov and of Gorky. No one stops to think that their works deal only with a part of Russia. The subject of Russian literature generally is the Great Russians, the people whom Stalin greeted as the kernel of the Soviet Union and the real victors in World War II in the east. It is realized in general that Stalin was a Georgian from the Caucasus who somehow achieved power in Moscow. Beria too was a Georgian but he has been eliminated and with him most of his Georgian friends on the ground of bourgeois nationalism. No one asks what this means.

The American people before and during World War I knew of the sufferings of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire. They also paid less attention to the Armenians in the Russian Empire who finally created an Independent Republic; but to-day the Armenian Soviet Republic is scarcely a name to those people who speak of Russia and Communism.

The West is encouraged in this attitude by the Great Russians of all political parties and tendencies. The remaining monarchists, the Kerensky liberals, men of every color and political direction all emphasize as do the Communists the unity and indivisibility of the old Russia, regardless of the era when it expanded into non-Russian lands. Moscow and Central Asia are both Russia, even though one is the kernel of the Empire and the other was first acquired almost within the memory of men now living. The free world, if it is to oppose Communism, must grasp some of these differences, acquire a sense of history, and understand the significance of the Soviet occupation of the area that it seized after World War II.

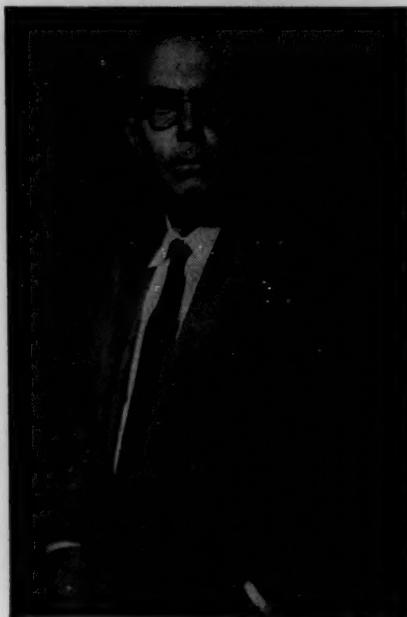
President Wilson did not recognize this nor did many of the other leaders of the democratic nations. While they were being brought through the work of such men as Masaryk and Paderewski to recognize the independence of the peoples in the Hapsburg Empire, the Russian Revolution of 1917 commenced. The tsar was overthrown and a so-called democratic regime was set up. With the highest idealism President Wilson recognized this and declared that the safeguarding of the rights of the Russian people would form an acid test of democratic sincerity and idealism.

The Western leaders were not prepared to face the fact that within less than six months all of the non-Russian peoples in the old Russian Empire were moving to throw off Russian domination of any and

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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PROF. MANNING

Dr. Clarence A. Manning is Associate Professor of Slavic Languages at Columbia University, with which he has been associated since 1917. Born in New York City, Prof. Manning received his A.B., A.M., and Ph.D. degrees from Columbia (1912, 1913, and 1915, respectively), and holds an Honorary Ph. D. granted by the Ukrainian Free University, Munich, Germany, in 1948.

He has travelled extensively in the European now satellite states, and was decorated by the three Baltic republics, as well as by Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, all of course in their free days. In 1939, Prof. Manning lectured at the University of Sofia, Bulgaria.

Among books written by him are: *The Story of Ukraine*; *Twentieth Century Ukraine*; *Ukraine Under the Soviets*; *Ukrainian Literature, Studies of the Leading Authors*; *The Siberian Fiasco*; and *Russian Influence in Early America*. He is also known as the translator of the poems of Shevchenko, and has been responsible for a number of articles on Russian and Ukrainian literature and religion, many of which have appeared in *The Ukrainian Quarterly*. Prof. Manning has also translated Negosh, *Rays of the Microcosm*, from the Serb.

This is Prof. Manning's first contribution to *The Armenian Review*.

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every kind. By the time the White Russian armies were ready to take the field in earnest to oppose Bolshevism, the ill-prepared and poorly armed forces of the non-Russian peoples were struggling to prevent the spread of Bolshevism and to establish democratic governments in their countries. It is no exaggeration to say that the Civil War was a three-sided conflict between the Russian Communists, the White armies composed of the old conservative and official classes and the non-Russian peoples who wished to have nothing to do with either of the first two contending forces. The fact that the Armenians were also involved with the Turks and that a resurgent Islam was on the move as a religio-political movement only added in some places a fourth element to the entanglement.

The difficulties of the non-Russian peoples were aggravated by their geographical position. They lived in a broad belt from Finland in the north to Ukraine on the Black Sea and then they stretched eastward through the Caucasus to the borders of China. As a result of the military alliances, the Baltic Sea was closed to democratic help and the Ottoman Empire banned access through the Dardanelles. Thus in 1917 and 1918, when the hopes for independence blazed the brightest, these peoples were deprived of all possibilities of Western assistance. Any military supplies had to be sent in through the ports of Murmansk and Archangel or through Vladivostok. In other words all arms and supplies had to pass through Great Russian territory and could not be delivered directly to the people fighting for their liberty. In the west, the only possible source was supplies from the Germans and when early in 1918 the Ukrainians signed the treaty of Brest-Litovsk to secure some part of the needed weapons, it was easy to persuade the west that the whole movement of liberation was German-inspired. By the

time that the Central Powers collapsed late in 1918, this idea had gained tremendous strength. The Western powers were war-weary; they were eager to demobilize their forces and were not willing to oppose an active resistance to the attacking Bolsheviks. Only military and relief missions were sent and one by one the struggling people were forced to submit to Bolshevik tyranny. Only the Baltic states and Finland which were directly accessible and had warm friends in Scandinavia were able to survive and even then it was not until the administration of President Harding that Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were officially recognized as free and independent states.

It was a sad ending of a noble dream, a pitiful betrayal of courageous patriots who looked back on the glorious pasts of their peoples and longed for those days of freedom to return. Many of the more unflinching went into exile. Still others hoped that something could be done, when the Bolsheviks gave something like recognition to the various Soviet republics. This proved only a sham. The relative freedom of the days of the New Economic Policy brought out new leaders and gave new opportunities for cultural advancement. The terror and murdering of the first months were replaced by a milder rule but it was not to be permanent. Slowly but inexorably the webs of Communism closed around these new leaders and by 1930 with the introduction of the First Five Year Plan and collectivization, most of them were liquidated, exiled, or disappeared as bourgeois nationalists and the iron curtain descended over the lands.

All through the late twenties and the thirties the process continued of remodeling the life and thought of the various Soviet republics not on the line of the national traditions and aspirations but according to the wishes of the Politburo in

the Kremlin. Step by step the powers of the various commissars were curtailed as more and more initiative was assumed by Moscow. Soviet control was exercised with greater force upon the Church to make it conform. Artists, writers and musicians were told what and how to write and repeated purges silenced or destroyed any one who dared to question or to give free scope to his talents. The central regime found the proper place for each Republic in the plans of the Soviet Union. It specified what and how much should be produced, whether it was in the way of agriculture or of manufactures. Factories were built in accordance with these plans and not in accordance with the needs or resources of a given region. Culture was to be socialist in content and national in form but no official definition was given of the latter and any glorification of the past or of national content was treated as bourgeois nationalism and cruelly punished. Everything was subordinated to the production of a dull and uninspired mediocrity which came more and more to be a glorification of everything Russian.

For twenty years between the World Wars this process went on as Moscow experimented with the best means for breaking the national spirit of its subject peoples. The Armenians like the other non-Russian nationalities paid heavily in the blood of their intellectual leaders and in the destruction of their national monuments and their ancient traditions. Yet the Soviets did not reach their desired goal. The national feelings of all of the oppressed peoples of the non-Russian republics lived on despite the most improved methods of coercion and of terror.

The West still paid no attention. During these fateful years, the free nations were so absorbed with the growing danger of Nazism and Fascism, that they shut their eyes to what was happening in the east,

sought for popular fronts, and made excuses for the Soviets. It was a dangerous mistake which was later to cost them dear.

Yet it is to be noted that during these twenty years not a single country, large or small, embraced Communism of its own choice. Not a nation on the frontiers of the Soviet Union voluntarily admitted the superiority of the Soviet ideology. Exactly as in 1918-1920, the Soviets had set up their own governments and overthrown the governments established by the native population by a well coordinated policy of infiltration, disintegration and armed force, so during these years, when outside of the Soviet Union, the world seemed peaceful, it was shown that without the use of armed force, the other weapons could be controlled by free peoples.

World War II offered a golden opportunity to the Communists. By the alliance of Hitler and Stalin and the consequent closing of the Baltic to the free world, the Soviets were able to seize the Baltic republics by force. When Hitler attacked Stalin, the nationalities showed their feelings by mass desertions but Hitler's philosophy allowed no compromise. Wherever his forces went, they worked with the same venom against the non-Russian peoples and mocked their hopes for liberty. The Allies poured supplies into the Soviet Union and in a burst of affection for their ally, they allowed the Soviet forces to "liberate" the nations on their western border. They allowed the Soviets to get control of China with the same mixture of naivete and ignorance. They returned millions of refugees to the Soviet Union for exile and liquidation.

In return they gained what they gained in 1918 — a growing threat to their own peace. The Soviets increased their pressure upon the non-Russian peoples and the cold war was on. The satellite states one and all experienced exactly what the Soviet re-



publics learned in the early years. The same measures are being applied; the results of twenty years of oppression are being administered at an increasing tempo, for the Kremlin has learned by careful experimentation on its first group of victims how to dominate, to disintegrate, to liquidate for its own purposes. To-day East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria and Albania, while nominally sovereign states, have little more to say as to their own future than do the non-Russian Soviet Republics. Moscow knows best and as the elder brothers, the Great Russian Communists will explain it to them.

Stalin the Georgian died and the power passed into the hands of Malenkov and a Great Russian group. Beria, the last important non-Russian in high position, was removed on a series of charges that go back to those dark years in the Caucasus, when all might have been saved. His Georgian and other friends have gone with him and one and all are charged with "bourgeois nationalism," although they were among the most fanatical advocates of Soviet expansion.

Once again we hear distinguished Western statesmen talking of the need to reduce the international tension by discussion with Malenkov. Once again we hear men of high reputation urging that steps be taken to quiet Soviet apprehensions of attack from the West, that Russia be given her proper boundaries and made secure.

Once again we find that strange mixture of Russians of every stamp protesting against the insult to the Russian people in proposals to give the national minorities, the peripheral peoples, the right to live as they see fit without the permission of the Kremlin, whether it be white, red, or pink. It is all part of the same story, the same program that worked so disastrously after World War I.

These same people may pay lip service to the liberation of the satellite states. They emphasize the hypothetical rights of the Communist leaders of the countries seized by Stalin in 1945, exactly as they emphasized the theoretical rights of the Caucasian and other peoples after the overthrow of their own governments in 1919 and 1920. Yet none of them even suggests that this outer fringe of the Soviet Union has any more real rights than the inner fringe included in the non-Russian Soviet Republics.

It is this that gives the present importance to the nationalities problem. All available experience and all available information emphasize the dislike of the non-Russian peoples for the Kremlin regime. Whatever their feelings, they are unable to move without the risk of physical annihilation. As every Armenian knows, the boundaries of a Soviet Republic within the Soviet Union are changeable at the will of the Kremlin but this lesson has been learned by the people of the satellite states. Outside the outer fringe from the Arctic to the Black Sea and from the Black Sea to the Pacific Ocean live the next victims. In the West the social and political reforms may be dangled as a bait. Elsewhere it is the national idea and for that purpose Moscow will deal with the opponents of the traditional governments or will create new states out of tribes and groups of tribes — anything to carry out the established policy of infiltration, disintegration and occupation. That has paid in the past and it may pay in the future.

The Soviets realize the power of this feeling of nationalism and so they maintain the fiction of the existence of the Armenian and the other non-Russian Soviet Republics even at the cost of sacrificing some of their own non-Russian Communists. They realize too that they can depend upon the anti-Communist Russian emigres to do their

best into bluffing the Western world to deny it and to preserve the one and indivisible Russia.

In this situation the task of the free world is obvious. It must show the people behind the iron curtain that free nations can cooperate in a common cause without the application of terror from a dominant slave driver. The free world must remain united and strong. Yet containment and appeasement and the reduction of tension by surrender to the Kremlin are not enough even with a European army and the atomic bomb. There is a further step and this is the open declaration that the satellite states and the non-Russian Soviet republics must become again in fact what the Kremlin declares them to be in theory — free and independent states choosing their own course, in accordance with their history and traditions, and in harmony with the rest of the free world. They must be recognized as possessing the practical as well as the theoretical right of withdrawing from that conglomerate mass of peoples included in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and its satellites and either joining the United Nations independently with governments of their own choosing or of forming their own federations and unions or regional alliances.

In bringing this about the Armenians in the United States and the free world have a twofold task. One part is entirely in their own hands and no one else can give them anything except sympathy. That is so to organize their own life in the emigration both in secular and religious ways that they can speak with a single voice in world affairs, not in the sense of a solid and compact unified society but as a people with all of their various points of view harmonized on the general principles which govern the life of a free people.

The second involves the free world. They must assist in the enlightenment of the lead-

ers of the free world and in bringing them to a realization of the meaning of Armenia and the other peoples in the past, the present and the future. Here the free world can help by doing its part in showing the folly and the falseness of the Russian and Communist claims that Russia or the USSR must be preserved intact, one and indivisible or the world will reap the enmity of the single Russian people. This second will be the harder task for error dies hard. For so many centuries under one form or another the Russians of Moscow and of Petersburg-Leningrad have so often repeated this story that some have even commenced to believe it themselves, even if their own arguments will disprove their faith.

Both tasks are important. Both tasks concern different aspects of the nationalities problem as it occurs in the Soviet Union to-day, as it held the center of the stage in tsarist Russia before 1917. Both tasks are pressing. With every year the number of those men and women who knew a free Armenia, who shared in the thrill of seeing their country again independent is growing fewer and fewer. Natural causes as well as the Soviet executioners are reducing their number. Thirty four years have passed since those great days, thirty four years and another World War and still their goal has not been achieved. Yet the final success will come — of that we can be sure. The world cannot exist half-free and half-enslaved. If the Armenians, the other enslaved non-Russian peoples, and the free world will hold firm to this faith, if they remain as true to it as their ancestors did to their own national cause through centuries of oppression, their sons, if not themselves, cannot fail to see that day when mankind really becomes of age and governs itself as citizens of a world state of humanity as well as of their own national groups. That is the ideal of the future

and it is because of that ideal that the nationalities in the Soviet Union and parts adjacent cannot be destroyed by any ac-

cusations of bourgeois nationalism or acts of terrorism. To believe less is unworthy of a free man in a free world.

## PICNIC

### I

*the crowd surges  
broils and browns  
under the all-inspecting sun. . .  
she's got fat, she's got thin  
she's expecting, I don't know when  
megha, dakeh, the shish kebab's gone,  
I don't know why I always come  
is Souren here . . . is Arpi home  
they're from the East, they're from Rome,  
. . . and into the microphone  
as if it weren't there  
the man with the white hair  
the man with none  
cry for the beloved country gone,  
pierce the air with hope and prayer  
. . . she's got fat, she's got thin,  
dancing starts soon, I don't know when.*

### II

*but look at the children  
wonder-eyed  
running the hill for a  
drink at the spring  
Ararat's shadow never circles now  
such a piece of earth as this  
there is our soil, rich and fallow  
but here is the seed!*

DIANA DER HOVANESSIAN



# THE PEASANTS

LEON SURMELIAN

As editor of the Armenian Messenger I went to various social affairs and this engagement party was one of the big events in our community, especially for that portion of it we called "the peasants," on the East Side. The girl's father, Tom Aivazian, was a rich man now. He had moved out of the East Side and built a large house in Pasadena, adjoining an orange grove he owned. He owned also a few thousand acres in Imperial Valley and up around Fresno, growing vegetables, melons and grapes.

I was interviewing those of my countrymen who had reached distinction in the larger American world as artists, professional or business men, and ran these interviews in the Messenger's "Hall of Fame." Tom Aivazian was one of the Personalities I had featured in that department as an example of what an Armenian peasant could do by hard work to make his American dream come true. In praising his simple tastes I made no mention of a curious and amusing fact: he preferred to live in the basement of his house, where he felt more comfortable, more like in the old village home under the ground where as a youngster he had lived with the sheep and the cattle during the long winters — in one of those "Xenophonian" hovels described in Anabasis and which exist to this day in some parts of Armenia.

But despite his burrowing instincts Tom Aivazian had a flair for sport clothes, played golf and voted the straight Republican

ticket. Like many of us he was two-men-in-one, an Armenian peasant in the basement, an American businessman in the upper part of the house. It had a grand piano in the drawing room and a set of the Encyclopedia Britannica in the library. His wife was a simple person like himself, of humble birth, but his children had acquired expensive tastes. His son was breeding race horses and his daughters patronized the smart shops in Beverly Hills.

It was the second daughter, Annette, christened Anahit, whose engagement was being announced with this party. Her fiance was a young dentist, Dr. James Huntington Astor, which was the Americanized form of Hintlian Asatourian, Hintlian being his mother's maiden name. Armenians are not in the habit of using their mother's maiden name, but the dentist had evidently set his heart on Huntington to go with Astor. The oldest daughter was the wife of Milton R. Kelley (Kelleyan), assistant professor of sociology in the University of California, and they had come down from Berkeley for this party. The youngest daughter was still going to college.

I could see how proud Annette was of her dentist. He didn't look Armenian. She did. She had inherited the Hittite nose that persisted, as noses have a way of doing, for three thousand years in the physiognomy of the Armenian. She was well groomed, with a figure which her I. Magnin dress showed to advantage, and I thought her charming. She had made one of the best sororities at the University of Southern California. Her father had promised to

<sup>1</sup> A chapter from Mr. Surmelian's forthcoming work — a sequel to his widely-read "I Ask You Ladies and Gentlemen."

give them a house in Beverly Hills as a wedding present.

As often happens in large gatherings the guests divided themselves into groups on the spacious lawn and in the adjoining garden, where the tables were set under the trees. We could smell the lamb being barbecued on skewers — no Armenian tribal dinner being complete without shish kebab. The Aivazians were known for their feasts, and they had invited about two hundred people. Samuel Kahramanian, the lettuce king, was making one of his rare appearances at an Armenian affair, being from Tom Aivazian's village and a relative. There was Peter Markarian, the big cattleman, with his blonde Russian Molokan wife. Kirk Najarian, the popcorn king, who proudly admitted he couldn't read or write. Their Cadillacs were parked before the Aivazian estate.

I never stopped wondering at the success of these peasants. It was like a tale from the Arabian Nights. The big shots were together, holding a sort of class reunion and exchanging their experiences. The most successful ones were also physically the biggest men, with powerful peasant frames. In this group there wasn't a man under six feet. Massive rock-like Peter Markarian was telling about a drive he had started among the cattlemen of the state to get better prices for meat, remarkable for an Armenian, I thought. Not many had reached positions of leadership in their business in addition to the money they made.

"The legislature is sitting on its fanny doing nothing," he said. "I called the governor long distance and asked him what's the matter with those fellows in Sacramento?"

Reaching for a pickle with his stubby manicured fingers he concluded his blustering denunciation of "those fellows in Sacra-

mento" in his village Armenian: "There isn't much brains among them."

Markarian ran his ranch like an "automobile factory," as he told me. He was a power in the cattle industry. He had not gone to an agricultural college like me but he knew his business.

The lettuce king, straight like a ramrod at seventy and with the look of a man who tells you, "Just watch me make a fool of him," recounted a complicated deal with a "Jewish" corporation in which he had turned the tables over his competitors. Laughing and slapping his knee he said in Armenian, "After I got through with them they fled like mice. But the fox's tail came back later and wanted to buy me out. He offered me four million. I said I wouldn't take a cent less than seven million. And now I wouldn't sell for ten million.

They spoke in millions and in hundreds of thousands, and each knew how much the other was worth.

Samuel Kahramanian was the richest Armenian in America, and the second richest in the world, the richest being Caloust S. Gulbenkian, the oil magnate and "mystery man" of Europe. Starting out as a farmhand at five dollars a week and sleeping in barns and stables he had gone farther than any of the others, and there were four or five Cadillacs in his garage; each of his sons and daughters had one. He was more educated, having possibly reached the fifth grade of an Armenian school, and he avidly read all the Armenian papers published in America, looking in vain for an article lauding his achievement, or hoping at least they wouldn't criticize him. He wasn't giving enough to our causes, his countrymen complained. What was he going to do with all that money? When a noted Armenian painter wanted a thousand dollars for a painting Kahramanian thought would look nice in his bedroom the lettuce king was

outraged. "I can get one just as good at the five-and-ten," he said.

Just as in a revolution new leaders come up, unknown and unschooled men beating professional generals in battle, so did these men rise from the ranks by their superior energy and cunning and better luck, not handicapped by those sensibilities and spiritual and intellectual needs that reduced many an educated Armenian, the poet, the artist, the scholar, to dire poverty. They succeeded in their single-minded devotion to their economic betterment.

It was difficult for me to communicate with them, their personalities eluded me, or the continuity was broken between us, they were no longer Armenians, nor were they Americans. Not a few of them had never been culturally Armenian, they were tribal men belonging to a no-man's land. Vast stretches of it existed in the immigrant population of America. Their wealth added to their anomalous character, making them economic rather than ethnic or national men. I had never known such Armenians before, this was a strange new type. But of one thing I was sure by now: the best Armenians were also the best Americans and the best human beings. They went together. And fortunately we had those two.

And we had the screwballs. More in proportion to our numbers than other minority groups. These were the artists even though they never wrote or painted, expressing the wild quixotic side of the Armenian character. One of them, from my home town, was entertaining the circle gathered around him. Mike Demirjian was a fabulous man, in Los Angeles to exhibit his famous rug, "The Magic Carpet of Liberty."

Leaning on his cane, for he was still the European gentleman even though living in a hotel where the rooms were a dollar a day, Mike told us about his friendship with Queen Victoria.

"She was crazy about me, absolutely crazy. I had so many long intimate visits with her in Buckingham Palace."

"You didn't make love to her?" asked the grocer Chobanian, who had tried to be an operatic singer.

"He did that too," said Kemalian, the bald-headed lawyer, smiling and puffing at his pipe.

"At twenty-one or twenty-two I was a handsome boy," said Mike. "You have no idea with what glorious women I have played, in the world's capitals, in the salons. Don't judge me by the way I look now."

"You look all right," said the lawyer. "Your hair dyed black, your cheeks red. He is a handsome son of a gun, isn't he?" he said to me in English.

Mike Demirjian straightened himself up and coughed into the cup of his hand. He had a distinguished appearance and though seventy-five looked about fifty-five. He took good care of himself and was always ready with a prescription for curing a disease, healing a skin infection, for improving the scalp or the complexion, the basic ingredient in all his remedies being olive oil. Pretending he didn't hear what the lawyer said about his dyed hair he gave us his prescription for keeping the cheeks smooth and red, with no wrinkles, with no signs of age.

"Every night before I go to bed I rub it on my face. I learned it from my grandmother. She could have won a beauty prize."

Getting back to Queen Victoria he continued:

"I gave her a complete report about the situation in Turkey. I told her what the British consuls and the British ambassador didn't know. Sultan Hamid had closed every source of information to Europe and had his governors sending him telegrams, 'Peace is perfect,' which he showed to the ambassadors in Constantinople. I was in

the Armenian demonstration before the Sublime Porte, I marched with the revolutionaries. There was no fear in my heart, and I was strong like a lion."

Mike had repeated his social and diplomatic conquests so often that he himself believed them. He took credit for a speech Gladstone had made in the British Parliament, in which he had said, "To serve Armenia is to serve civilization." Mike repeated that well-known phrase in English and emphasized it with his cane.

"In London I was with the great lords all the time. They knew how much Queen Victoria liked me and they had me in their homes for dinner, for balls, for week-end visits. I was the rage in London. Everybody wanted to meet me. Invitations came from left and right."

Years later, Mike turned up at the Versailles Peace Conference with his rug and managed to have the peace treaty signed on it. He had photographs showing President Wilson, Lloyd George, Clemenceau, Orlando, Marshal Foch, General Pershing, the King and Queen of England, the King and Queen of Italy, standing on his rug, and Mike himself was in a few of these historic pictures came in hand, brief case under his arm.

He still had that brief case with him, bulging with photographs, letters and clippings, which he showed to every newspaper editor in America, being a tireless publicity hound. He had exhibited his rug in every city in the United States and he was still at it, entertaining his audience with his immigrant English and personal anecdotes of what happened in Paris, or London, or Washington, when he was there, hobnobbing with the great. He was no peasant, but a city slicker living by his wits, an Armenian Ulysses, and serving the Armenian cause was the passion of his life.

Mike couldn't hold the stage against

Adourian, the cotton broker, a lexicographer in his spare time. Joining our group he showed us a newspaper clipping, an illustrated article about the mosaics uncovered on the walls of St. Sophia in Constantinople after the Turks converted it to a museum.

"It's the picture of our St. Gregory the Illuminator. Look at it, my friends, it's plainly written under it, Gregorios Armenias. Nobody noticed it before me," chuckled the broker, proud of his discovery.

We looked at this mosaic likeness of the founder of our Church, a white-bearded figure in white holding the Bible in one hand and making the sign of the cross with the other. No wonder he converted the pagan Armenians to Christianity, I thought. Who could resist that gaze, the wisdom, hellfire and peace it promised?

But this wasn't the only discovery Adourian had made. He had traced the Anglo-Saxons to Armenia, and he was burning to tell us about it.

"Brother, you are passing the limit," said the lawyer Kemalian. "Not everybody and not everything comes from Armenia, don't be ridiculous."

A huge man who towered over all of us, Adourian smiled amiably. He was sure of his ground, and carried away by his discoveries. Did anyone doubt them? He gave us examples of Anglo-Saxon and Armenian words that were the same or practically the same. *Am-am*, *came-cam*, *son-san*, *door-dour*, *foot-vot*, *daughter-douster*, *deal-dal*, *quarry-qar*.

"And Erman, Herman, Armen, Arminius, they all mean ARMENIAN," he shouted gleefully.

"Brother, the man is right," said the owner of a tire shop. "English must be derived from Armenian. We had many of these English words before the Americans got to using them, like *hotel-motel*. We had

the word motel long before they started building them in this country."

The lexicographer connected his name, Adour, with troubadour and with the river Oder; Asatour or Astour with Asturia; he had found, he said, more than a thousand Armenian place names in Western Europe, left by successive waves of Armenian emigrations, such as the Paulicians.

"So many things, every day," he chuckled.

Said the grocer Chobanian, "That's why our children feel inferior. They don't find anything about Armenia in their American schoolbooks. We have been a great civilized nation, but Americans don't know it."

The food was served buffet style in the garden. The Armenian likes to eat outdoors, it adds to the flavor of his meals. We loaded our plates with tender morsels of the barbecued lamb and pilav mixed with pine nuts. With *boereks*, some flaky and made with cheese, others filled with ground meat. We had flat sheets of Armenian bread. No other food like this, I thought. A corps of women were busy in the kitchen with that intense tribal activity that produced all these dishes, one more delicious than the other, and we hadn't come to the pastries yet, *paklava* and *kata* and *kadaif*, filled with crushed walnuts and soaked in honey or syrup.

The bishop had come from Fresno for this occasion and sat at the head of the main table, a handsome man of Byzantine splendor, who, it was rumored, ordered his toilet articles from Paris. The eyes of the women were on him and he knew it. He blessed the tables with a quick prayer.

"What is he doing among these Kurds?" said Mike. He was angry because he wasn't asked to sit with the bishop after having dined with Queen Victoria in Buckingham Palace and with President Wilson at the White House. The worldly bishop was

flanked by the peasant plutocrats and was most cordial with them.

The necessary music was supplied by the "Armenian Bliss" orchestra, composed of an *oot* and an ordinary guitar, a flute, a violin played upside down on the knee, and a tambourine, the man with the tambourine singing in a fiercely loud voice the old village songs. They had gone out of fashion in Armenia but were still popular in California. I hoped they wouldn't start playing Turkish records or equally horrible Armenian records made in this country. I doubted if the Turks enjoyed such music any more.

There were many toasts, and I too got up and said a few words in English as a representative of the younger generation. After we had finished eating the orchestra played dance music. For a while nobody moved, and men nudged one another.

"Home-wrecker, why don't you get up and start to dance?"

"You wretch, you good for nothing, why don't you shake a leg?"

"I can't move, I ate too much."

"Aren't you men ashamed that you always leave it to the women to start the dance?" said a woman.

She danced gracefully, despite her heavy breasts and hips, with many motions of her hands, and to encourage her we clapped our hands, keeping time with the music. Presently a man got up and danced with her. She became coy and pretended to be fleeing from him as he followed her and danced martially around her, moving his arms. When he won her in this love game they synchronized their fast footwork. Applause.

One by one or in couples the guests showed their dancing ability. Some of the men were expert in Caucasian dances and did much jumping and whirling around. A part of the company broke up into backgammon and card-playing groups, and a



political argument started among the intellectuals, with the lawyer Kemalian heading the rightist and the grocer Chobanian the leftist patriots.

"Brother, when an Armenian borrows a foreign idea he out-popes the Pope. Our Bolsheviks wanted to go Lenin one better and gave Kars, Ardahan and the whole of Turkish Armenia to the Turks. They gave purely Armenian Akhalkalak to the Georgians, they gave historic Karabagh, that ancient bastion of Armenia with all its monasteries and cultural monuments, to the Tartars of Azerbaijan."

"And the Tartars got Nakhichevan too."

"They left us only a few rocks."

"The Soviet regime in Armenia can't last twenty-four hours without the aid of Russian bayonets."

"We need them to keep the Turks out."

"Brother, there is no national sentiment over there, it's not our Armenia, we don't have an independent government of our own."

"We are co-equal with Russia, what are you talking about? What will happen if the Russians withdrew to the other side of the Caucasus Mountains? Who will protect us? We'll have once again the nightmare of Pan-Turanism and Pan-Islamism."

The lawyer refused to consider Soviet Armenia an Armenian state, it's a Russian province, he insisted, where the Armenians aren't free.

"All right, let's invade Cilicia then," said the grocer. "From now on it's Kemal vs. Kemalian. We will take Cyprus too. It was ruled by the Lusignans, we have a claim to it. We will sweep away the British fleet, land our expeditionary force in Cilicia and hoist the Armenian tricolor on the Taurus Range!"

He was making fun of the lawyer who believed that with communists in control of Russian Armenia, of those few rocks, the only truly Armenian state could be estab-

lished in Cilicia, along the Mediterranean, where the last Armenian kingdom "wrote such glorious pages in our history."

Meanwhile women went around urging the guests to eat melons, grapes, peaches, apricots, pears, pomegranates.

"Don't refuse, I beg you. Just try a bite of this melon. It's our own."

"What kind of Armenian Christian are you? You aren't eating anything?" After the man had eaten enough to fill three stomachs. These were not starving Armenians.

I asked Prof. Milton R. Kelley if he was in contact with the Armenian students in Berkeley. I knew a few of them.

"Yes, of course. We have an Armenian club. They come to my office, we have some bull sessions, we argue."

"What's your impression of the boys from abroad? Do you find them very different from Armenian American students?"

The young professor clamped his lips on his pipe and considered my question for some time before answering. "They are bright boys, they are serious students, but I—I hardly know how to describe their attitude. I'm afraid most of them are not taking full advantage of their opportunities in America. They have a-a-a spiritual arrogance which I find most unfortunate."

"It's their best quality," I said. "You have to care for the things of the spirit to be spiritually arrogant."

"Let's say we Americans have a few shortcomings, but if a hostess invites you to dinner in her home you don't criticize her food and tableware in front of her."

"Armenian bad manners. But it's only when you are indifferent that you don't criticize. The things of the spirit mean something to those boys and girls, they have brought certain ideals and standards with them, and they are better human material for America than the uncritical ones, they will do more good. They aren't here to fill their pockets with money."

He brought out my own spiritual arrogance with his pseudo-Irish name, trying to cover up his tracks. I wouldn't even talk to Dr. Astor for that reason.

"They have the curious notion that we are incapable of teaching the humanities. They don't take courses in my department, which is all right. But English, literature, history, particularly American history, are of no interest to them. They are missing so much."

"I was suspicious of liberal arts courses and had the same attitude," I said. "They make great sacrifices to study in America, and generally it's science and technology for them, in which America is tops. But they aren't indifferent to the humanities. As for American history, well, it doesn't seem much to the Armenian with three thousand years of history behind him."

"These Armenian students think everything Armenian is best and they look down on America. The Armenian has such exaggerated notions about himself. We don't amount to very much after all."

"The American boasts about his country but not about himself. The Armenian boasts about Armenia as well as about himself because he is insecure."

I went to watch the backgammon game between Samuel Kahramanian and Gorganian. A group of men were clustered around them, watching each move they made. The players counted the dice in Persian. "*Hep yek!*" "*Du besh!*" "*Shesh besh!*" "*It's mars,*" the lettuce king said. A double score. Gorganian, the rubbish king, was still full of fight. "You'll have to open your doors, Sam, and once I hit you you are through."

Mike Demirjian had won his audience away from the lexicographer and was telling about the part he played in the drawing of Armenia's boundaries, taking credit for the Wilson Line.

"President Vilson called me to the White

House after the Supreme Allied Council asked him to arbitrate the boundary dispute we were having with Sultan's government. He had all kinds of reports and maps before him. 'Mr. President,' I said. 'We have got to have Trebizond, Armenia can't live without a seaport. You can't leave Trebizond in the hands of the savage Lazs.' 'How about the Greeks?' he said. 'They too are claiming Trebizond.' 'I'll settle it with Venizelos,' I said. I was so chummy with Venizelos that was no problem. The whole thing was my work."

"Too bad Kemal spoiled the soup or you would have been the admiral of the Armenian armada," said the grocer.

Mike recounted his romantic adventures in Washington, where the wife of a rich and powerful senator had fallen in love with him and committed suicide when he wouldn't marry her because he wanted the senator to remain a friend of Armenia. She had twice pursued him across the Atlantic while he was engaged in these diplomatic maneuvers and kept President Wilson and the American Intelligence Service informed on certain extremely important developments abroad, behind the scenes. And there was the French countess he was asked to escort in Washington where she was on some Red Cross mission and who rewarded him for his company with the highest gift in her possession.

"I had a lot of kef with her. She went crazy over me."

There was no end to the screwball saga of Mike Demirjian. He had been everywhere, knew everybody in the world's capitals, in the salons, the intimate friend of kings and presidents and prime ministers, he had loved women of all nationalities, including the wives and daughters of Turkish pashas.

A rancher from Bakersfield spat on dollar bills and pasted them on the brows of the musicians, or he tossed them into the hat

they had placed conveniently before them. He had five and ten dollars bills sticking out of his pockets. The musicians did their utmost to please him as he danced solo, in his shirt sleeves, a cocky millionaire.

"You see," Mike said to me. "They continue these disgusting customs. These donkeys will never be men. All they need is *davul-zurna*." Bagpipes and drum.

"They used to do it in the villages of Trebizond," I reminded him.

"Those were beautiful traditions. Our Trebizond weddings lasted three days and nights. And every man had his place. They respected the city man, the person of education. When I returned to Trebizond after the Constitution the villagers received me like a king. They carried me on their shoulders. To celebrate my return they were firing away and the Turks in the next village thought it was an Armenian revolution."

I looked at the paunchy people around

me. No, these were not like our peasants in their American clothes, the grace of Armenia's fields and flowers was gone out of their lives, I felt like an alien among them. Mike complained all they had to show was money.

Other men who reached a high state of bliss didn't want to be outshone by the Bakersfield sport and the dollar bills rained on the musicians. They played their instruments wearing their laurels of greenbacks and looked like grotesque figures of American prosperity.

I joined the circular group dance, and hand in hand, we went round and round as in Armenia, but the sight of all this money coming out of the pockets of former peasants had me worried. This was the feast after a million years of famine, the peasant revolution; but I wondered if after having conquered the wilderness America wasn't riding to another wilderness in Cadillacs.

### YEARNING

*if I cry, and my tears fall in pain,  
it is my love for you that can not bear the  
hurt —  
if my mouth could once kiss the beauty in  
your hands! —  
if your hands could once hold my face so  
that I might see me living within your  
eye!  
my soul! — if you are so far, I need you as  
the delirious desert wanderer would  
need water.  
and I call —  
you do not hear —  
what for me then, beloved?  
what would you for your crazed orange  
flower?*

*if to be near you were death, then I want  
to die.*

CHARLOTTE MARKARIAN



# *The Old Country*

P. K. THOMAJAN

*What stalwart men were these hardy Armenian immigrants who landed on these shores in the late days of the last century.*

*There was blood and fire in their dark eyes and a grim-set determination that was ready to pit itself against herculean tasks.*

*They had run the gauntlet of many hazards to reach this Land of Opportunity. Here they had come in quest of the Golden Fleece, precious gold pieces they hoped to garner and return with to the homeland where they would reclaim their birthright, take unto themselves a comely bride, then prosper and propagate.*

*Their huge bulging valises with their palm-cutting handles would, in the near future, be filled with treasures. That was the fond dream . . . the stern reality was . . . a humble lodging house with plain meals at a nearby coffee house, a job in a wire mill or foundry, which netted them less than ten dollars a week for six days of hard labor from dawn to dusk. Fares were a nickel but that tidy sum was frugally saved by rising a little earlier and walking to work.*

*Sunday, they walked again . . . to the jham, where chants and incense restored their souls. They lit candles and uttered a prayer, reaffirming their deep desire to the One on high.*

*Ah, the old country . . . the sad eyes of these solemn youths would suddenly gleam whenever they spoke about its fair gardens filled with flowers and fruits of rare fragrance and flavor. There Mother Earth seemed to be in her most fertile mood.*

*The months ran into years . . . the meager earnings yielded only paltry savings, portions of which were proudly sent via draft and money order . . . tangible evidence of their approaching the goal. Sinister clouds gathered on faraway horizons . . . then came news of frightful massacres, of dismembered families. Slowly, word arrived of various remnants located in obscure places. Then hurried cables to rescue these loved ones and bring them to the new homeland. Now the procession of the years seemed to move ever faster and the once-rosy visions of the old country wilted away and brave hopes waned . . . of someday, someday assuming one's ancient heritage. There was no other alternative . . . here one must forge one's destiny, established one's worth. It was a stark challenge that called for working . . . working with a mighty vengeance.*

*In later years at country picnics, when davools and zoornas made the air vibrant with native rhythms . . . a lonesome voice would venture into song . . . the plaintive Armenian melody once again revived misty images of the old country, that sacred ground where our spirits would most definitely dwell after the fulfilment of the demands and duties of this immediate existence.*

# ORIGINAL TRANSLATIONS FROM DANIEL VAROUJEAN

ARAM TOLEGIAN

## Editor's Introduction

Daniel Varoujean, the foremost Armenian poet of the beginning of the century, affectionately called by his kinsmen "The Singer of His people", was born in 1884 in a village near Sebastia, Turkey, called Perkneeg. In 1896, during the Armenian massacre days, while still a child, he was taken to Constantinople in quest of his father whom he thought was dead, but who was later found jailed under false accusations. Here Daniel Varoujean studied for two years at the Mekhitarian schools where he early showed signs of the coming poet. His instructors, recognizing his genius, sent him to study at the Moorad Raphaelian Armenian school. In 1905 he went to the University of Ghent, there taking a course in political science which he completed in 1908. Varoujean met his death in 1915 at the hands of the Turks, together with scores of Armenians poets, writers and intellectuals. His complete works, representative samples of which Mr. Tolegian presents in the present work are: TREMORS; THE HEART OF THE RACE; PAGAN SONGS; and THE SONG OF BREAD. "The Song of Bread" consisted of manuscripts found on his person at the time of his death and was published posthumously in 1921.

## Author's Foreword

No one is as sensible as we are of the shortcomings and inadequacies of the present work. In the absence of other works

of this kind, we have had to labor without benefit of standard and, in a lesser sense, without benefit of authority. Over mooted questions of prosody and over questions of philological importance, we have had to sit, not by choice, as final arbiter. When the facts did not bias us toward a definite conclusion, we have had to rely solely upon our judgement. We only hope that that judgment has not too often erred; and where it has, we ask the kindly indulgence of the critic.

Among the many to whom we are indebted, we need first mention the Armenian Fathers at the Monastery of San Lazarro. The Abbe General gave us permission to use the monastery's veritable storehouse of books. It was a rare privilege to study and read in the monastery's Byron Room. Like Byron himself, we, too, felt that the Fathers of the monastery were the kindest to be found anywhere. To Father Filipo Yadighian and to Father Vartan H. Hatzouni do we especially owe our thanks and gratitude. Always they were doing some service to our cause and always making us feel that they were under our obligation. Such kindness deserves more acknowledgment than we here can give.

We are also deeply indebted to two friends, both of whom have had wide experience in translating from the English into Armenian. They are the late Mr. E. H. Melcon and Mr. Z. Sipantzi. The former has given of his time unstintingly and has

helped us over many a difficult passage, sharing where he could, our enthusiasm; the latter, likewise, has kindly given over to us large portions of his spare hours, helping us revise the movement of a line, change by a shading the meaning of a word, and, in general, being of any and all manner of service. Here, too, we must acknowledge our debt to the Armenian critic, the late M. G. Veradzine, who very generously entered into correspondence with us with regard to the life and writings of Daniel Varoujean.

In addition, our deepest thanks go to Dr. K. Khantamour of Los Angeles, whose library of books in Armenian, books otherwise unobtainable, has always been generously at our disposal; to Mr. Vahe Haig of Fresno, California, who has entrusted to us for over a year his personal scrapbook containing material on the poet; and to Mr. H. Ignatius of Los Angeles, who has kindly gathered Varoujean material through his friends and given it over to us.



#### Translations of Selections from the "Heart of the Race" <sup>1</sup>

VAHAKN. Ashtishat, an ancient city in the presentday Turkish vilayet of Moush, Asia Minor, is the site of the historic Armenian monastery of St. Garabed. Legend states that when the religious zealot, Gregory the Illuminator, came upon Ashtishat, in the beginning of the fourth century A. D., and found the pagan temple to the sun-god, Vahakn, flourishing, he ordered it confiscate and, soon thereafter, in the cause of Christianity, established and consecrated the monastery of St. Garabed.

In Armenian mythology Vahakn represents, among other things, might and the sun; and in the temples to him at Ashtishat, in the usual pagan manner, sacrifices were offered to him by his devotees. The term *Vahunis*, seen in the poem, is the

name given to the priests of Vahakn. *Ashtishat* is a generic name in the Persian language: *Ashti*, or Hashdi, meaning sacrifice; and *shat* meaning town; — hence, sacrifice-town.

In the monologue "Vahakn" Varoujean ingeniously provides a frame of reference which renders the narrative easy of comprehension and gives the poem its quality of piquancy. For instance, though the husbandman is contemporaneous with the poet, he is nevertheless atavistic, and, in a modern world, still harks back to the pagan-worship of his ancestors. The devotee is not a spurious pagan — he is real and genuine enough to lead his "brawny, beautiful, sublime" wether to the temple of Vahakn and there really to sacrifice it, and to ejaculate to high heaven and to Vahakn with a characteristic pagan frenzy, "Lo . . . the flame . . . rises . . . with alternating reeks . . . to thy heavenly demense."

Of course, Varoujean, true to his oriental background of secrecy, does not break faith with it by informing the reader the why and wherefore of the sacrifice; surely it is not because of artistic necessity that he refrains from portraying the spiritual conflicts which bring the husbandman to the temples of Vahakn, petitioning the sun-god of his ancestors where the religion of our times had failed him. It is simply that the poet, himself a product of an Oriental background, knows that the spiritual crisis which impels an Oriental husbandman to make a sacrifice will not and cannot be given to the confidence of others.

"Vahakn" has no rhymes and is written in the so-called free verse manner.

#### VAHAKN <sup>2</sup>

*Behold! O god of my fathers  
Nigh thy fane I draw,  
And leading by its halter*

<sup>1</sup> Daniel Varoujean, *The Heart of the Race* (Constantinople: Ardzev Press, 1909) 349 pp.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 157-161.

I bring a wether from the valleys of  
Daron.<sup>3</sup>

Behold! My sacrificial offering  
Is battened and brawny and hulking—  
At its white brisket the soil's whole life is  
found.

My wether's craw knows not the common  
manger,

In the open meads my wether has grazed,  
Its udders laved in the sacred founts of  
Heaven.

When my wether blows its mighty breath,  
Its head bent toward the ground,  
Before it the sand the soil of the earth is  
made to flail;

And through its black nostrils comes the  
smell

Of the wet verdure of boundless plains.  
Behold! My sacrifice is brawny, beautiful,  
sublime—

On its head the curving tawny horns,  
Set as a coronel of thy glory;

In its black, impetuous eyes inflame  
The incenses of might;

Its hirsute tail,

Flapping as an adder,

Strikes at the horse-flies and at its flanks,  
Keeping its body clean, keeping its body  
holy.

O Vahakn, thou father-god of might,  
Thou corporealized Sun.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Daron — the name of a fertile district in the vilayet of Moush.

<sup>4</sup> In Zabelle C. Boyajian's *Armenian Legends and Poems* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1916) page 10 occurs a translation of "Vahakn, King of Armenia" by the author, taken from the ancient Armenian historian, Moses of Khorene (5th Century A.D.). Here follows the translated passage:

"Heaven and earth were in travail,  
And the crimson waters were in travail.  
And in the water, the crimson reed  
Was also in travail.  
From the mouth of the reed issued smoke,  
From the mouth of the reed issued flame.  
And out of the flame sprang the youth child.  
His hair was of fire, a beard had he of flame,  
And his eyes were suns. . ."

And in prose the translation continues: "With our own ears did we hear those words sung to the accompaniment of the harp. They sing,

Thou in the seed of Dikran,<sup>5</sup>

Succor my soul, with a sun-ray anoint my  
lips.

Lo I kiss thy holy fane,

And taking up the deadly hammer once  
again,

With colossal arm,

I smash the forehead of my ram,

And at thy knees its gushing blood I sacri-  
fice.

. . . Behold! Even now there fumes before  
thee

The crackling sacred pyre;

The flames weave and tumble,

Intervolve among the branches of the olive-  
tree;

And now,

Intoxicated with the molten gum of juniper-  
trees,

Leap up straight

And sing

The song of transmutation,

— The flight of things into clearer soul.

Take,

Take these the bloody ribs

Of my sacrifice;

These its fattened shanks,

This its snout and this its warm heart,

(Which is still a-quiver);

This, take this, the brain

Which even now dictated instinct

And breathed stubbornness into the horns;

Take this its gall,

Which I place upon its buttock,

Hoping it will burn

And char throughout — take, O take. . .

moreover, that he did fight with the dragons, and overcame them; and some say his valiant deeds were like unto those of Hercules. Others declare that he was a god, and that a great image of him stood in the land of Georgia (Circassia) where it was worshipped with sacrifices." (The brackets are ours).

<sup>5</sup> Dikran, or, as he is known in history, Tigranes the Great, was the most powerful of Armenian kings. Of him Cicero says: "He made the Republic of Rome tremble before the prowess of his arms." Quoted from Aram Raffi, "Armenia: its Epics, Folk Songs and Medieval Poetry" . . . in Boyajian, op. cit., p. 126.



Lo, the flame that even now has puffed its  
wreath of smoke  
Rises thinly, limpidly  
Taking up my sacrifice  
With alternating reeks,  
Aromatizing, O mighty god,  
Thy heavenly demense.  
O thou mighty one,  
Thou sun-god and god of strength  
Receive my offering,  
Which from my burnished urn  
I pour upon the fire.  
Hark! Lo! the wine,—  
Thy nostrils ope, O god,  
Inhale its sweet-perfumed smell,  
Become drunk with it,  
Gayly, divinely,—  
Be reconciled to these, thy latter-day apos-  
tate people.  
Hark! Lo! the haoma \* . . before thee I  
sprinkle it,  
Clean, sweet, and pure,  
As the tree from its wounded breast  
Drips it into my splendid urn, seven-times  
washed.  
This receive,  
Accept it even as blood of an innocent in-  
fant,  
Even as the precious sweat of pregnant  
dams.

O sublime majestic god,  
Now I have given thee  
All of whatsoever there was  
In my cottage  
And in my soul—  
Art thou gratified?  
—Thou hast received  
What thine enemies have forgotten to de-  
liver  
To thine empty temples at Hashdishat,  
To thy ruined, desolate temples.  
Now, genuflecting,

I come into thy sacred fane,  
(As I come unto our race's last standard-  
bearer, Vahuny),  
And kiss the earth,  
Knowing how a portion of thy soul  
Gives root and growth to the giant pines—  
And with arms outstretched,  
Lifted toward thee, the wether's blood still  
dripping from my elbows,  
I pray,  
O thou Vahakn, O god of my fathers,  
I pray. . .

To thy power and might,  
To the might of religion in thine arm,  
Thine arm with which thou sundered,  
On a day,  
The mouths of dragons,  
With which thou scattered,  
As seeds of sun,  
The stars of the milky way;  
To thy might,  
Which is the flight and the soul of unend-  
ing creation,  
And to its infinite kiss

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### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Aram Tolegian, the author of "Original Translations," is a graduate of the University of Southern California, and holds a Masters degree from that same institution. At present, he is the Instructor in the *Great Books* course at Los Angeles City College, an Instructor, Department of English, East Los Angeles Junior College, Teacher of English, University High School, Los Angeles, and has for the last two years edited the monthly journal "Victory," the organ of the Armenian American Citizens League of California. He has had training as a teacher in the Department of English, University of California at Los Angeles, has taught nine years at University High School, served as lecturer at large in the university, acted as editorial re-write man for Hollywood novelists and foreign-language writers. He hopes "to live long enough to do something better in the future!"

Mr. Tolegian has made Armenian prosody his specialty and has traveled abroad in England and Italy to complete his research. "Original Translations" is a thesis presented to the faculty of the Department of Comparative Literature at the University of Southern California for the degree of Master of Arts.

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\* Haoma — An intoxicating drink used in the sacrificial ceremonies of Ancient Persia, equivalent to the Hindu soma.

Which breathes upon the worlds  
 Fauna and flora and flame—  
 To thy might,  
 Which through its unending kiss  
 Fosters the essence and principle  
 Of the atom's immortality  
 And the immortality of the brain and will:  
 To thy might,  
 Which makes the seeds to crack,  
 Which makes the sap to rise,  
 Singing,  
 To the topmost branch of the oaks:  
 To thy might,  
 Which rocks our cradles  
 And after death wafts us up to the stars  
 And up into the sphere of yet another life:  
 To thy might,  
 Which builds a nation  
 Instinct  
 With the courage of lions:  
 To thy might and mighty arm,  
 Thine arm which pours its strength into  
 the nation's arm,—  
 Like a fiery condor under its luminous  
 folded wings  
 Hatches its likeness—so from our mothers'  
 bosoms  
 There issue in thy likeness  
 Great men and heroes, heroes and great  
 men:  
 To thy holy might,  
 To the might which makes thee holy.  
 And whose overflowing fountain of intelli-  
 gence thou art,  
 O thou Vahakn, behold,  
 I pray . . . to thee I pray . . .  
 With my gory arms outstretched, I pray. . .

★ ★ ★

A GOING TO BATTLE. — A sense of patriotic idealism pervades this poem. Here the poet, through the monologue, brings to bear against his sweetheart the arguments for going to the "just battle." Below in the valleys defenseless countrymen are waging a battle against the common enemy, the Turk. The poet, too, must go down to

the valley of war — but not without her. They cannot, because they are lovers, remain aloof from the pains of their people. He asks his virgin sweetheart to go to the battle with him; and, if he should die, it will have been a kind of death for which "I had longed for a long time," that is, dying while in the service of his people. He cannot, while his nation is being massacred and annihilated, either serve his sweetheart or his other mistress, poetry. She must go to the battleground with him while Dante and Tourian must be abandoned — the one to the flames, the other to the sepulchre. She, his sweetheart, must accompany him, if only to see with what bravado he approaches the enemy and how fearlessly he falls; she must accompany him if only to see how, after the battle has been waged and the field is quiet and he himself is numbered among the dead, how, where he fell, a "lion will forever roar."

In the general massacres of 1895-1896, and in the later massacres of 1909, hundreds of Armenian poets, novelists, scholars, and clergymen, yes thousands of them, volunteered to go into the "valley of death," fight a losing battle with the enemy and die. It is of this feeling that Varoujean here writes. The poem will have a deeper poignancy when the reader realizes that Varoujean himself, in 1915, under circumstances remarkably similar to those of which he writes, met the same fate, only more cruel, with thousands of his intellectual compatriots.

"A Going to Battle" has no rhymes and is written in the free verse style.

#### A GOING TO BATTLE<sup>†</sup>

*Forward! Let us go, O maid of Armenia,  
 Thou eaglet who hast been lulled and lul-  
 labed  
 With the gurgling of brooks  
 Which spring from the mountainsides,*

<sup>†</sup> Varoujean, *op. cit.*, pp. 139-142.

To the just battle let us go.  
 Ere the ray of the sun has reached the seed,  
 They kill yonder, yonder they slaughter  
 Life in the fields, ideals in the breast—  
 Yea, they slaughter yonder, yonder they  
 kill!

O black-eyed maid, with love more ardent  
 I would love thee;

If our palfries, in one stride,  
 Should stamp together.

Leave the shuttle, whose clattering bobbins  
 Inspire in thee the song of silent hearts;  
 Leave the hearth at which ye flourish  
 As flourisheth

The zephyrous wafts of spring;  
 The hearth (remember?) where anon  
 Ye were made palpitant

With the plaintive cheeping of the chick,  
 Whom the dread kite in the field  
 With pecking beak was strangling.

Remember that mount where first I saw  
 thee,

When first I thought

How like a tall, slim rose-tree ye were? . .

From the summit of that mount,

We, during the night, astride our palfries,  
 And in parallel stride,

Will descend, O maid,  
 Into the tenebrous field. . . .

The cold glitter of thy yatagan,

The lightning flashes of thine eyes,  
 (Struck from the sky of thy vengeance),  
 Illuming the road to war.

Ah then, over thy shoulders,

Thy undone tresses thou wilt throw,

Letting the bold tempest among them sing  
 Nature's wild song.

And if this wise we wend our way,

Thy muscles strengthening

With the palfry's every bound, —

And when the flower

That on thy breast would yield its fragrance

Lies crushed beneath the hooves,

Then, in place of tender gallantry,

To thy tempestuous lips I will resort,

To thy energetic and mellifluous kiss.

What! because thou always foundest me  
 Sad before my secretaries and gloomy-  
 souled,

Didst thou think, O virgin maid,  
 That I would always thus remain?

What! didst thou think

I could not change in a trice

Into a dirk my pen,

My ink-stand into the bestial enemy's red  
 heart?

Well, exceeding well, can I change the  
 dream,

And rending its veils of zephyr  
 Render it nude,

Only to re-clothe it again

With the star-shaking tempests of war.

When yonder always they weep,

Because they die, and die because they  
 weep,

Get thee hence both books and paper;

Dante to the flames I cast,

And Tourian,<sup>8</sup> whom I loved so long,

Back to his sepulchre I throw.

Pretty Virgin dost thou know

How little recks the world of others' tears?

We, let us not sleep with the world's  
 sleep: —

Under the world's quilt of passion

Libidinous Venus whores delightfully.

And there, raped Themis,

Gives birth to a brood of Bacchuses.

Wounded, blood-stained, torn to pieces,

There in the valley below they wait for  
 us —

Our comrades — the people;

And, into my quiver

I have not forgot

To place the fiery bolts of Mars.

I am now stronger than even Love's look,

And immutable more than fate:

Is not my comrade-in-arms a virgin,

And fire-winged Love my path-finder?

Thou, O virgin rose, there is the battlefield,

<sup>8</sup> Bedros Tourian (1851-1872), a popular romantic Armenian poet.

*Thou, O turtle-dove, thou wilt be a flame  
consuming,*

*A sinewy eagle:*

*Is not the lover-male thy comrade,*

*And thy pathfinder the ideal?*

*Perchance I may perish there —*

*Would that I might;*

*For a long while have I longed*

*To make of blood a blood-bespattered  
death-quilt,*

*A pillow from my fallen charger's wounded  
flank.*

*After having killed to die,*

*Ah, for that a long while I have longed.*

*If beneath the witnessing glance of the  
moon*

*The great helmet of Haik<sup>9</sup>*

*I have filled a few times*

*With the enemy's blood,*

*If I fall this way it matter not:*

*For, when upon a day my widely-wounded  
soul*

*Is awakened from the earth of the father-  
land,*

*It will see the hungering orphan sated,*

*And the sated safe;*

*The tiller in the field without fear,*

*And the field unruined,*

*Freedom progressive and life free, —*

*It matters not if I, this way, I fall,*

*At my grave I know the snake will never  
coil,*

*And thy forget-me-not, O Armenian maid,*

*Will foreverwhile stay blue;*

*And a victorious lion there,*

*Its paw upon a leopard's breast,*

*Its head raised toward the stars,*

*Will forever with full lungs — forever roar.*

#### Cadavers on the Wagon

"Cadavers on the Wagon," although a ghoulish, and, in some instances, a revolting poem, is nevertheless lyrical and beau-

<sup>9</sup> Haik is a generic term in Armenian legend. Like Jove, he is the father of all gods and a mighty warrior.

tiful. It is a poem which describes the terrible effects of war — mangled bodies, bloodshed, and lonesomeness (if such a thing could be) of men who have died far away from their loved ones, on distant battlegrounds. The effects of contrast drawn by the poet are doubtless too sharp — yet the poem would have lost that subdued poignancy, which is its chief merit, if it did not limn (in light and shade, as it were) the dualities of mangled men and sun-rays weaving a shroud, of grannies grouping around to pray as the wagon passes, of a virgin casting "tear-soaked roses on the cart . . . which trundles by." The chief effect of the poem is its sense of resignation and passivity.

The poem is written in quatrains of alternating rhymes, the first and third being rhymeless throughout. The rhyming lines are by a foot<sup>10</sup> shorter than the rhymed lines, thus giving, in the Armenian, the effect of an extended couplet.

#### CADAVERS ON THE WAGON<sup>11</sup>

*At eventide on empty streets*

*A creaking cart is passing by,*

*Before the cart a brownish mare,*

*Behind a soldier drunk with rye;*

*It is the hearse of mangled men*

*Winding toward a graveyard of their  
sires; —*

*The sun sends forth its dying rays*

*And weaves a shroud ere it retires;*

*The mare is lean — she scarcely draws*

*.....The freightage of her wicked lords;*

<sup>10</sup> Foot — Properly speaking the term "hadads" or a phrase should here be used; Armenian prosody is not strictly dependent for its rhymes on the foot — rather it is dependent on a phrase of rhythm, a fluid unit of movement. Cf. Aram Tolegian, *Some Distinguishing Characteristics of Armenian Prosody* (unpublished; Los Angeles: Department of Cooperative Literature, University of Southern California, 1939).

<sup>11</sup> Varoujean, *op. cit.* pp. 111-113.

*And certainly she ruminates  
of other things, her own rewards.*

*And from the spokes around the wheels  
Red blood it is that trickles down,  
As though the cart were laden with  
Red roses gathered from the town.*

*There on the cart the corpses are,  
Upon each other piled deep;  
Here a corpse's fist is thrust  
Into a mouth left wide ajar:*

*An old man there with chin smashed in  
Still gazes on the vacant sky;  
He must in death have uttered oaths —  
So twisted seems his mouth and wry.*

*Through the clefts between the wagon's  
floor  
The viscera of some slip through  
And sweep along the dusty street —  
While preying dogs lunge at the spew.*

*These mangled men, misshapen, torn,  
Bear divers wounds from divers wars;  
Yet toward the graveyard they are drawn  
To lie with bold progenitors;*

*And not a soul bends over them  
With sorrowing tears and blessings  
mute —  
In the quiet the smell of blood lifts,  
Fuses with the zephyr's flute.*

*Yet in the dark from pane to pane,  
As rolls the cart along its way,  
Some sputtering candles spew their flame,  
And grannies group around to pray;*

*And now a beautiful virgin maid,  
From a portico set high,  
Casts down her tear-soaked roses  
On the cart which trundles by.*

## Pagan Songs <sup>12</sup>

TO THE STATUE OF BEAUTY. With this sonnet serving as a proem to the *Pagan Songs*, Varoujean gives us the touchstone of all that is to follow. Here we come upon familiar terms and phrases — Olympus, the classic sculptor, fire, fury, virgins, sirens, sacrifices, temples, altars, washing and feet washing; paganism and romanticism, blood-brothers as they are now combine to bring to the reader something of the sensual quality of the Near Eastern Oriental. Roses and nightingales, perfumes and incense, full-bodied women, wine and feasts — this is the charm of the East and this is what the poet has brought to us in his *Pagan Songs*.

This sonnet, like all of Varoujean's sonnets, is composed of two quatrains and two tercets, the quatrains rhymed abba, cddc; the tercets efe, fgg. It should be indicated that Varoujean separates quatrain from quatrain, and tercet from tercet.

## TO THE STATUE OF BEAUTY <sup>13</sup>

*Be thy marble quarried from Olympus'  
Deepest womb, and 'neath my hammer be  
it hewn  
A maid of fire and fury, love and life;  
Thine eyes, be they abysses, wherein plunge  
All men that would immortalize their race;  
Thy contours, be they each indelible,  
Thy breasts, a harmony wherein bestir  
The life-and-love fulfilling essences;  
Yea, be thou nude, as even the poet's soul,  
And let the power of pagan nudity  
Make man to suffer, never touching thee.  
And when thy altars need a sacrifice,  
First at thy feet, I first would be slain, —  
And feel my blood lave round thy faultless  
feet.*

<sup>12</sup> Daniel Varoujean, *Pagan Songs* (Galata, Constantinople: Shant, 1912) 330 pp. For Armenian title Cf. Appendix.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.



### Oriental Bath

This is considered to be the poet's most famous poem, and rightly so. For here it is that the sensualist in the Oriental artist is fully at work. Here it is that the thick, heavy atmosphere of the Near East is recreated; and here it is that Varoujean uses to the utmost, (without even so much as playing around the fringes of eroticism) the objects and images of Oriental life.

The taking of a bath in the Near East has as many rituals, and takes about as long, as the chanting of the rituals in a Coptic church. The bathhouse itself is an imposing edifice, with its marble floors and walls, its high dome wrought in mosaic, its water and steam rooms, its cooling cubicles, and its many masseurs equipped with ancient Roman strigils. A bathhouse is built in and around such areas as afford natural springs. Hence the bathhouses of Asia Minor, all of them, are really natural springs of hot and cold water enclosed by building chiefly in the Roman and Byzantine architectures.

Reading Varoujean's "Oriental Bath" is like having a ring-side seat. He observes each item of importance, characterizes in a phrase here, a simile there, the institution of the Oriental bathhouse. Baths are not taken in the Near East every day; but rather, when they are taken once a week, or once every two weeks, they take from three to four or five hours. Women go to the bathhouses in groups — never unchaperoned. Groups of from ten to twenty-five, either members of a single household, or members of a neighborhood, gather together, go to the bathhouse together, gossip together, bathe each other and leave for their homes again together. It is the picture of the entering of "the houris" with which Varoujean begins; and he ends with the picture of "the houris" wending their way home through the narrow, hilly, and tortuous streets of Tokat.<sup>14</sup>

The poem is written unrhymed throughout and in the blank verse manner, though, to be sure, blank verse as we know it in English does not exist in Armenian poetry. What we mean here by the blank verse manner is that the poet has employed a regular succession of phrase rhythms in lines of equal length. The Armenian language is predominately polysyllabic, with the primary accent almost always on the penultimate. Thus, in a poem like the "Oriental Bath," it can be said that there is a more or less even distribution of the anapestic measure, with rare alternations of the amphibrachic and the bacchic.<sup>15</sup>

### ORIENTAL BATH

*The green-domed bath's inner door opens  
idly,  
And as it grates and sweats the livelong  
day,  
There pounds against its massive ebon  
frame  
A brace of heavy pendant pulley-weights,  
Which now describe an arc full wide and  
neat  
Beckoning in a group of naked houris,  
Who enter in full-lingeringly and slow;  
All naked and surpassing beautiful  
They are — their arms are folded modest-  
wise  
Across their beauteous breasts, the swells  
whereof  
Are weighed down on their forearms, and  
spangled through  
With brownish nipples bobbing to and fro;  
Their wooden sandals, wrought in mother  
of pearl,  
Clink sharply on the damp and marble  
floor;*

It is at Tokat that Varoujean wrote the "Oriental Bath," as well as "The Working Woman." Cf. Luther Gorgodian, "A year with Varoujean," *Phoenix*, Vol. III, No. V: 1621-1624, May, 1920.

<sup>15</sup> For a fuller discussion of Armenian prosody, Cf. Aram Tolegian, *Some Distinguishing Characteristics of Armenian Prosody* (unpublished; Los Angeles: Department of Comparative Literature, University of Southern California, 1939).

<sup>14</sup> Tokat — A town on the Anatolian Plateau.

*Within the bath their low melodious voices,  
Their breaths' soft pants, to muffled tinkling turn.*

*And as the vaporous billows rise within  
The bath, like moistened veils, enveloping  
Their naked bodies, which now start to bud  
With sweat, their eyes give off a humid luster,*

*Like blinking stars seen through a foggy sky.*

*Houris are at their baths! — some lengthen-  
ed out*

*On warm navelstones, dream with languid  
looks,*

*While from the light-diffusing dome the  
sun's*

*White ray is filtering through like pearly  
rain*

*Rendering into a silvery sea the cumbrous,  
Floating vapors, wherethrough swim the  
sensual*

*Swans of Orient lands; and now they cast  
The towels aside which had clung like sea-  
weed*

*To their thighs, — Lol! their bodies turn to  
statues.*

*And now their tresses, braid on braid, like  
billows*

*On a sea of storm, unravel, wherefrom  
Escape at intervals some precious stones.  
Those tresses, O those tresses, with which  
It seems the whole bath undulates, darken-  
ing,*

*In their raven sway, the white and granite  
Navelstones. Their tresses — they comb  
their long,*

*Long tresses down to the endless tips  
With golden-gilded combs, as their fingers  
Swin in the sparkle of their diamond rings.  
The houris sometimes languid feel and  
faint,*

*And sometimes shiver suddenly when from  
The nebulous dome above, descend some  
cold*

*And cooling dewdrops straight atween  
their breasts.*

*Behold! The marble founts, the thousand  
taps,*

*Now bursting one upon the other with  
Tumultuos bubbleings, as ashen vapors,  
Rising downward, lift sinuously and slow;  
On every side the waters overflow  
And wind their way toward empty water  
troughs.*

*Houris are at their baths! Canovia's graces  
Seem they all and as closely intertwined,  
As gathered round the sparkling marble  
basins,*

*They bathe their breasts, their shapely  
limbs and arms,*

*And all adjacent areas of flesh;  
And, seated on the navelstones, their thighs  
Amplify and spread, and drink the sensuous  
Waters which glide thereby and titilate.  
Behold, the golden dippers ring across  
The stones the box-tree dippers sometimes  
crack*

*Like hearts when in the service of these  
nudes;*

*The argyl-cool, thyme-scented clay dis-  
solves*

*The argyl-cool, thyme-sented clay dissolves  
As it is stroked through flowing waves of  
hair,*

*Transforming waves to silk; the cleansing  
clay*

*Anoints the bosoms, hiding them in foam;  
And, with the coolness of the argyl's foam,  
Its slippery substance, the houris refresh  
Themselves and rub their bellies velvet-  
smooth,*

*Which gleam as shingles on a river's whit-  
ened beach.*

*The waters boil and lave to purity  
These nubile nymphs of Oriental Fire.  
And now from every side the navelstones  
Away and downward flow the waters,  
Hurling straightway toward the outfall  
troughs,*

*Investing even these with perfumed scents.  
With lime and argyl the water is grey,  
And, as its torrent swells, it carries along*

Frizzles from the arm-pits, brown twinings  
from

The hair, and downy leavings from these  
white

And animated statues, who now fill  
Exhaustedly their final dippers full  
And pour them listlessly adown their backs.  
The boiling waters run, once more the  
bath

Uproars, the sewer-troughs once more are  
filled,

Once more the houris bathe — their skias  
take fire

Like flaming full-blown roses in the sun.  
With languid eyes and dippers at their  
heads,

They bathe their smooth and ample bosom  
clean.

With in vapors rarefied, and red as tulips,  
File on file, the houris issue from the bath.

O the superabundant locks aslant their  
breasts,

O the wetted curls weighed down with wat-  
er-drops,

With drops that fall as mother-of-pearl  
about

Their dainty, dimpled rabbit feet; to sing,  
O but to sing their charms and perfumes  
rare,

Their bodies' glow, the sandals, silks and  
veils!

Those fingers which but today were dipped  
into

The depths of henna bowls, as in a bloody  
Heart, let me but kiss them; and let me  
Kiss those tresses, made soft with oils sweet,  
Tresses which in the night, beneath the  
moon,

Give off their odors to the downfilled pil-  
lows;

Yea to kiss, to press against my lips,  
Their aromatic brows, cirrous lashes,  
Bosoms bedecked in brilliant lavaliers.  
The stones whereof irradiate as torches  
Around the bridal bed — O but to press  
My lips against their navels, wherein, deep-

concealed,

Abide the hashishes of Araby  
And Afric musk!

Now homeward bound, and burdened  
Prettily with precious stones and jewels  
rare,

And scented airily with oils and thyme,  
The fragrance whereof aerates the paths,  
The city squares, and scents the leavings in  
The luncheon-pails and wafts its perfume  
deep

Within the folds of undulating skirts, —  
Now homeward bound they wend their  
several ways:

And biting cold becrimsoning their cheeks,  
The pavements echoing their foot-falls'  
sounds,

And, perfumed footfalls on Oriental streets,  
Tracing footprints as sweet as flowers that  
bloom

In May, will make the streets themselves to  
think

That Spring, the Spirit of Spring, is passing  
by.

### The Flickering Lamp

This trio of quatrains, though not writ-  
ten as a literary ballad, has nevertheless  
the qualities characteristic of the ballad. It  
is simple and direct in its narrative; its re-  
frains possess the quality of incremental  
repetition; its choice of simple words, and  
the more homely phrases, instinct with rus-  
tic life, lends to it the touch which makes  
of it a genuine ballad. Here, in twelve lines,  
the poet has achieved the distinction of  
telling a whole story, a tragic story — full  
of the poignant sorrows and disappoint-  
ments of his time.

The use of the word *bride* (Armenian  
*hupu* — transliterated *harss*) in the Arme-  
nian idiom has connotations the equivalents  
of which are non-existent in the English lan-  
guage. The word *bride* is used in the Ar-  
menian not only to indicate the status  
of a girl just married, but also to indicate

the status of bridehood as a permanent condition of life. Thus, a mother-in-law, a father-in-law, call their son's wife *their bride*; and the neighbors to the father-in and mother-in-law will say of the bride that she is so-and-so's bride, but will not say of her that she is the bride of the groom and, moreover, it matter not how old the bride becomes she is forever called a bride. All that has been said of the bride is also true of the bridegroom.

In "The Flickering Lamp," therefore, the vocable, *bride*, must be regarded as a term of sentiment, endearment and possessiveness. Here the bride is but an accessory to the narrative, just as her mother-in-law is its chief character. The groom's mother has heard reports that her son, coming back from the wars, has achieved distinction in the field. She expects her son to return with the air of a hero, when she finds that the cart approaching her homestead is a hearse, her boy's lifeless body upon it. Through the symbol of the lamp the whole story is told rapidly and effectively.

#### THE FLICKERING LAMP

*This festive night's the night of triumph —  
Pour oil into the lamp, O Bride,  
My boy returns a victor from the wars —  
Trim well, trim well the wick, O Bride.*

*A wagon stops afront the door, beside the  
well —*

*Light up, light up the lamp, O Bride,  
My boy returns with bay-leaves on his  
brow —*

*Bring up, bring up the lamp, O Bride.*

*Lo . . . with blood and Grief the wagon's  
laden. . .*

*Hold up, hold up the lamp, O Bride.*

*There lies my valiant son shot through the  
heart —*

*Oh . . . snuff out, snuff out the lamp, O  
Bride.*

#### The Betrayed Virgins

Here is told again the familiar tale of the poor, innocent, virgin girls, laboring as seamstresses, being taken into the confidence of rich young men and, in the end, being despoiled. It is an old story and its use here, by the poet, would have little significance were it not for the classical fetishism with which the Armenian of the old school regards the word virgin.

Like the ancient Greeks and Romans, the Armenians themselves had built a cult around the concept of virginity; and, as with the Greeks and Romans, the word virgin is regularly seen in their literature. It is not so much a question of whether the Armenians are a more moral or less moral race than others as it is that the Armenians, being an ancient race and still surviving, have kept alive the historic and cultistic fetishism of virginity as a symbol of chastity. It is this traditional Maryolotry which gives to the poem of Varoujean a clue to its real meaning, as when he indicts the rich "magnificent buffoons" so mercilessly, and, to the Armenian mind, so tellingly.

Of course, the undeceiving of virgin girls goes on to this day everywhere, and severe punishment is meted to doers of evil. Insofar as this is true the poet speaks of a universal; but insofar as the modern world's making a fetish of it goes, he speaks of only a segment of tradition in the history of an ancient race.

In "The Betrayed Virgins," Varoujean has used quatrains with alternating rhymes, the closing line of each quatrain being shorter by two anapestic measures from the first three lines.

#### THE BETRAYED VIRGINS

*You labor in the huts, aside the just flam-  
beaux,*

*Sewing shrouds for rich folk, more often  
robes;*

*Your bony fingers, the needle between  
them, tremble from*

*The cold — though unperturbed your souls.*

*But desire unholy conspired against your  
hunger*

*And bought your bodies, selling whole  
your souls; —*

*So divinely purblind is unprotected inno-  
cence*

*That it does yield to pledge and smile.*

*O those rich young blades, those magnifi-  
cent buffoons,*

*Who sewed their gold to reap your cleanly  
flesh, —*

*They — they who entered into your huts as  
innocent lovers*

*And left with laughter in the end;*

*To them your hearts becomes only a wine-  
glass fair,*

*Which the drunkard, upon drinking, smash-  
es*

*With delight — and on a day when mothers  
you became,*

*They left you mateless and in tears.*

*And so you walked the streets, — you who  
were as pure crystals,*

*Trampled on by men, have now become as  
mire.*

*Even so the buffoons' crimes grow as a gem  
deep in*

*Your wombs and brim with sacred love.*

*Catinna you were called — or, ostracized  
Fantine,*

*Who with harlotry her motherhood did  
guard;*

*Margarita you were named, from hell itself  
defiled,*

*And Mary herself defiled from Heaven.*

*And there anear the well I see one of you  
stand*

*And women laughing at your growing  
girth;*

*From you the spotless virgins hie away and  
leave*

*You standing with your waterpail.*

*Forlorn in the darkness of her hut yet ano-  
ther*

*I see, her hair aslant her newborn babe; —  
Now to the tender mouth she brings her*

*breast, wherefrom*

*She feeds her child with tears of milk.*

*And here a beauteous blonde, now become  
a trollop*

*In the street, lightly plights her faith for  
bread;*

*And on a day when penniless she knocks  
against*

*The bordel's door, Hell itself is hers.*

*And you whose blush is thickly coated o'er  
with paint,*

*You give your body to the lecheries of  
love, —*

*Save for the sacred bloodbeats in your  
mother's womb,*

*Your flesh is fouled in venery.*

*O my luckless sisters, upon you tears I shed,  
Shutting my eyes from shame, at your*

*shame I weep, —*

*For in the khan the bulky barrel's top is  
crowned*

*With the coronal of your chastity.*

*Upon my soul your tainted tresses creep  
like snakes,*

*Like poisonous snakes, breathing gall into  
my blood, —*

*And I rap out an oath on mankind's pan-  
dering ways,*

*On all its fustian Golden Calves.*

### **The Working Woman**

Recurring constantly through the body of Varoujean's poems is the theme of women; now women as mothers and wives and grand-mothers — now women as chaste



maids and beautiful creatures and factory hands. It is of the factory working-girl that he speaks in "The Working Woman." Always compassionate, always commiserative, the poet here, more than in any other poem, bewails the fate of women in his country and, as usual, offers them his protective arm.

In "The Working-Woman" Varoujean sees pass, beneath his window, in the early hours of dawn, a frail, tubercular girl, ill-shod and with the look of hunger in her face. He sees how the "lowly Turk" lewdly whistles after her. He sees a determination in her face, as though she were conscious of the conflict she is going through; and he guesses that her mother "lies sick" at home. He wants to talk to her, tell her she is his sister and how ready he is to succor and protect her "mirthless race." Finally, in a burst of the deepest compassion, he offers her all that is his by right of conquest and fame, if only she would never have to work again, if only she would be free from coughing and hunger.

In the "Working-Woman" Varoujean uses quatrains, the first and third lines unrhymed, the second and fourth rhymed. The rhyming lines are by a foot shorter than the unrhymed lines. The dactylic rhythm predominates throughout the poem, and is alternated occasionally with medial substitutions of the anapestic measure.

#### THE WORKING WOMAN

*From beneath my window like a wraith  
Ye pass, as at every dawn I see thee,  
And as ye pass around thy virginal head  
Descend the petals of my rose tree.*

*I hear thy footfalls in the quiet street  
And the wakeful whelps that growl and sneer;  
Or deep in my slumber I hear the rasping  
Crack of the cough that brings thy tear.*

*As thy floating figure falters in the wind*

*Starved, methinks, and sleepless thou must be;*

*Yet, the falling frosts that gather at thy curls*

*Seem as sapphires on a silken sea;*

*Or methinks thy footgear frayed and torn  
With pools of water eddying through;  
Or a lowly Turk with passion base  
Is lewdly whistling after you;*

*And while ye to the workshop tread,  
(Ye think for light and life ye go),  
Methinks at home thy mother lies sick,  
And the oil in the lamp burns low.*

*Yes, I think . . . and like a madman I long  
To leave my window from above you,  
And come down close to you, kiss your lean  
hands,  
And suspiring whisper, "I love you."*

*For I love, O sister, I love thy grief  
And grieving, which is my grief supreme,  
I love the battered breast which still can sing  
The burden of a lark even though a dream,*

*I love the sleepy dirge thy tresses sing  
As they flow and fall adown the frame,  
They tell a tale of thirst and hunger  
And how they would a maiden maim.*

*And, O sister sad and somber, sister mine,  
With thee I would share my strength, my fame,  
And taking thee unto my breast, thou dove-  
let  
Soft and straying, wed thee to my name;*

*I would make of my heart a shield for thee,  
Defend thy breast, of thy honor be the veil,  
And, under the mighty sway of my arms  
Protect thy mirthless race, thy beauty frail;*

*I would give thee all that strife hath given,*

All the spoils of life and lustihood,  
Engarland thee with conquest - colored,  
Triumph - tinted roses of my blood, —

Yea, all this and more lest thou be pale and  
sad,

Lest thou at misty dawn to workshop run,  
Lest the lamp above thy wasting mother  
burn low, . . . . .

Lest thou, O sister, couch beneath the sun.

### The Song of Bread <sup>16</sup>

TO THE MUSE. <sup>17</sup> The proem to *The Song of Bread*, this sonnet at once initiates the reader into the rustic themes of the volume. <sup>18</sup> The staple rustic themes and objects are enumerated in the sonnet: "The hardened husbandman," wheat, wheat-fields, millstones, flour, dough, the peasant and his soil; and the themes of making bread, sowing wheat, and plowing are, each of them, suggestively introduced.

Throughout the poems in *The Song of Bread* the authentic strain of a poet-farmer is ever-present. The farmer's delight in viewing his wheatfield "waving as a sea of emeralds"; his simple unawed rapture at the descent of "wheat-seas" from down the hill-swept slopes of familiar hills; and his rootedness in the soil which brings him his daily bread and health — each of these experiences is related with a concreteness of fact and indigenoussness of conception only within the grasp of a real farmer and real poet. Varoujean is eminently both farmer and poet in *The Song of Bread*.

<sup>16</sup> Daniel Varoujean, *The Song of Bread* (Constantinople: C. Arzouman, 1921) 95 pp.

<sup>17</sup> For a notation of the type of sonnet structure which Varoujean uses Cf. p. 44, "The Statue of Beauty."

<sup>18</sup> The title-poem to *The Song of Bread* was never written. It might be hazarded that the poet was leaving the composition of the title-poem last, that he might the better have succeeded in epitomizing, into its lines, the various themes of his poems.

### TO THE MUSE <sup>19</sup>

Teach me, O thou muse of my sires, teach  
me

How the hardened husbandman, in cling-  
ing

To the crooked handle of his plow, rends  
The barren soil's chest; and how, beneath  
The cascade of the sunrays, the russet  
Wheat is pyramided into stacks, and  
How the mill-stones groan, how overflows,  
Around the bread-pan, the mass of leavened  
dough,

And how the dough is baked in ever-fired  
Peasant ovens; and how bread, holy bread,  
Scatters mirth to many, strength to all;  
Teach me, and crown my lyre with ears  
of wheat,

As by the wheat-stack, beneath the willow's  
Shade I sit and lo, all my songs are born.

TILLERS — The poem "Tillers" reminds one of Millet's famous painting "The Reapers"; but one is only reminded of this because of the sharp contrast of the subjects in both scenes. In "The Reapers" the subjects are bent, worn, haggard — as though the labor of reaping had left them but hulks of their former selves. The subjects seem healthless and hopeless and dejected.

In the "Tillers" of Varoujean one is made aware of the "mighty children of the fields," beneath whose "sway of strength the soil throbs," and in whose "broadened veins the sunrays course." When these children of the soil stalk "across the fields, . . . Mother earth itself doth tremble from the womb." When they sow in the furrows, "mirth it is they sow," and "God but gathers from the furrows on their brow, goodness." Robustness, health, and hope predominate the picture of the "Tillers." They are strong and mighty children of the soil, not the soil's slaves.

It might be profitable to urge upon the consideration of the observant that whereas

<sup>19</sup> Varoujean, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 5, 6.

the reapers, in Millet's painting, are peasant-farmers and the result of a civilization chiefly technological, the tillers of Varoujean are the peasants of primitive hopes and primitive ambitions. This might explain the lack of hope in one kind of peasant and the abundance of it in another. At any rate, it is refreshing to conjure up the picture of a real farmer fully enjoying his work, and hoping for nothing more than that the soil be made to yield the abundance which his labors exact.

### TILLERS

*They are the mighty children of the fields,  
The tillers of the soil around my town,  
Who weave with pearly sweat sweet Nature's crown;  
Beneath their sway of strength the soil throbs,  
And in their broadened veins the sunrays course.  
And when they walk with heavy steps across  
The fields, though not a single sprig is bruised,  
Mother-earth itself doth tremble from the womb.  
Their heads are never bowed before the shrine,  
But speckled are with gold-dust of the straw.  
Among the furrows, mirth it is they sow,  
And God but gathers from the furrows on  
Their brow, goodness: than the song of flowing sap  
And growing buds, no other song they know.  
What though the oxen's froth is on their hands,  
And stable-smells reek from their motley cloaks —  
The sundry seeds from out their palms first sprout!*

FIRST SPROUTS — The life of the farmer can be as contemplative as the life of

an urban philosopher. In "First Sprouts," aside from the beauties of the familiar fields in which the farmer daily moves, there is the reflection, on his part, that the "dew of my sweat," the spittle of my ox," and "the ray of the sun," all combine to produce the first sprouts in his fields. Something of the farmer's self and his labor is seen in each sprout. The farmer feels that Nature and he both conspire to produce a "robe of emeralds" on the surface of Mother Earth. This sense of the farmer's kinship to Nature and to the forces beyond and within himself, together with the beauties of the field, results in his gospel of hope and faith.

In "First Sprouts," Varoujean has employed stanzas of five lines each with the second and fourth lines and the third and fifth lines rhymed, the first line being left unrhymed throughout. The second, fourth and fifth lines regularly take an anapestic measure a foot shorter than the trimeter anapest-dactyls of the first and third lines. The rhythmic effect of such a stanzaic structure gives, in the Armenian, a rare melody of movement, at once lyrical and strophic.

### FIRST SPROUTS

*From beneath the earth the teeming sap  
Explodes the seeds; the fields tonight  
Beneath the cool spring-moon, are turning green. . .*

— Mother, fetch me a sprout,  
The dew of my sweat upon it.

*Riotously, furiously they have sprung,  
Shot forth, found the air: behold, the sprouts!*

*A robe of emeralds sways across the plains. .*

— Sister, fetch me a sprout,  
The spittle of my ox upon it.

*There glitters from field to field, from plot to plot,*

*Like green candles, a multitude of green-  
ing sprouts.*

*And every sprout holds in its mouth a  
pearl. . .*

*— Herdsman, fetch me a sprout,  
The ray of the sun upon it.*

*The sprouts they dress the wastes of earth  
with life,*

*And give the bread its early smells and  
flowers,*

*While among their verdure swim the  
brownish clods. . .*

*— Bride, fetch me a sprout,  
Thy finger's fragrance upon it.*

*There, alone in the fields, my almond tree  
Has blossomed — there in the sprouting  
fields. . .*

*— Mother, sister, herdsman, bride,  
From yonder fetch me flowers,  
Fetch me flowers rosy-hued, . . .  
With the reaper's hope upon them.*

THE RIPE FIELD. — Here the poet has employed a verse form not in his usual metier. The iambic trimeters regularly seen in the first and third lines of each stanza are all of them catalectic. In our English version we have tried to approximate this rhythm, only with a view to trying to retain something of the unique flow of rhythm the poem obtains in the Armenian. Except for the first line of the last stanza, the first line of the poem is used as an initial refrain. The effects of such a refrain are productive of mixed results. Where such an initial refrain is used, as, for instance, in the trilet or villanelle, indeed it gathers from its repetition an increment and a lyrical force very desirable in a lyric. Yet, when it is used in the manner in which Varoujean employs it, it may be questioned whether its artless use yields a repetitive increment.

It is also proper to ask whether, in a language such as the Armenian, (where a

greater majority of the words are either compounds or polysyllabic), the use and propriety of iambic catalectics and units of rhythm in the dimeter will not always result in artifice. This question may more especially be asked when a poem, such as "The Ripe Field," strikes a lyrical note.

"The Ripe Field" is rhymed in the second and fourth lines, the first and third being unrhymed.

### THE RIPE FIELD

*My field is golden . . .  
And as with fire  
The wheat is aflame  
In a furious gyre.*

*My field is golden . . .  
Beneath the stalks  
The soil is soft —  
Aloft high heaven rocks.*

*My field is golden . . .  
In the sun, unsubdued,  
Four-pronged wheat spikes are,  
Each one amber-hued.*

*My field is golden . . .  
Like lightning on the sea,  
Through the wheat spears pass  
Bee, moth and bumble-bee.*

*My field is golden . . .  
Winging from the sea,  
Oftimes, through the wind,  
There soars a bright canary.*

*Rock-a-bye, O golden field, —  
Grant me a space, O field,  
When I may come with a silvery scythe  
And reap the golden yield.*

WHEAT SEAS — Varoujean's "Wheat Seas" is justly famous in Armenian poetical literature. Its rhythms flow easily and constantly suggest the free movement of wind over fields of wheat. Aside from the nearly

perfect accord of word rhythm with wind rhythm, the poem is famous for the clear-cut image which it delineates. The Armenian people, having for centuries past been an agricultural people, can easily appreciate the images which Varoujean brings to them in "Wheat Seas."

Wheat, as it later becomes bread and a source of common sustenance, has come to be regarded the world over as a symbol of health; and in the literature of almost every country it is so used. But, among the Armenians wheat, as a symbol of health, has an even greater currency in their literature. For six centuries they have been a conquered race under the Turks; before that their history has been punctuated for many centuries with invasions, plunder and pillage. Consequently, their homes were razed and their fields ruined. More often than not, throughout the centuries, the Armenian has had looming before him the spectre of hunger. It is doubtless for this reason that Varoujean's "Wheat Seas" has an especial significance and has, because of that significance, merited the fame which it is accorded by all Armenians.

Composed in five-line stanzas, "Wheat Seas" is rhymed abbaa. In the original the first and fifth lines are of equal length, composed in iambic dimeters and employed throughout the poem as refrains. The second, third and fourth lines are of equal length and are composed in iambic hexameters, with an occasional initial, terminal or medial anapest breaking through the established pattern.

## WHEAT SEAS

*Winds pass —*

*My wheaten plots tenderly awake,  
Infinite quivers over them break;  
Down the sides of the hill*

*Seas pass.*

*Winds pass —*

*So much are the fields ablaze with green  
The grazing kids will glut upon the scene; —  
From the floor of the wave-laden valley*

*Seas pass.*

*Winds pass —*

*And now the waving wheat fields, like a  
robe of gold,  
Now sundered stand, now sewn as one upon  
the wold; —  
Now from the shadows, now through the  
sun-gleams,*

*Seas pass.*

*Winds pass —*

*In spears of wheat green kernels undulate  
Moonflooded with the moon's white milk of  
late; —  
From threshing-floor to thorp, from thorp  
to mill,*

*Seas pass.*

*Winds pass —*

*With emeralds the boundless plains are  
full a-wave —  
Perched on swinging spears of wheat the  
sparrows rave —  
While from all around the tempest-beaten  
wheat fields,*

*Winds pass.*

*Seas pass.*





# THE ARMENIAN EMANCIPATORY STRUGGLE

## PART II

VARDGES AHARONIAN

### Shahamirian's Political Family

Joseph Emin's preachings for the liberation of Armenia found a fertile soil in a company of Armenian merchants of Madras headed by a wealthy merchant by the name of Shahamir Sultanum Shahamirian. This man was a tailor by trade in Nor Djughha who, having moved to India, had laid aside his needle and scissors, and having entered into business, had amassed a vast fortune. Shahamirian found a co-idealist in the person of Grigor Khojajanian, another wealthy merchant of Madras.

In this little patriotic group a prominent role was reserved to Shahamirian's son Hacob and his teacher Moses Bagramian, a native of Karabagh. It is quite likely that this little band included other members but the above-mentioned names are the only ones which have come down to us.

Like Joseph Emin, without doubt this little group of Madras, India, was familiar with English liberal ideas and was influenced by them. Acquaintance with the English enabled these men of political thought to read the works of European political writers.

Moses Bagramian was one of the most well-informed and influential civic leaders of his time who had moved from his native Karabagh to India, fully conversant with the history of the emancipatory struggle of his native province and highly enthusiastic about the movement. This fact partly explains his enthusiasm for the liberation of

Armenia. Was it not true that in the Karabagh of Israel Ori and David Beg days, the ancient Artzakh (Karabagh), and Siunik (Z a n g e z o u r), were regarded as the core of future free Armenia? Bagramian was in agreement with this view inasmuch as the Armenian Meliks of Karabagh continued to hold the power to a certain extent. The thing to do was to unite these Meliks, consolidate their forces, destroy the Tartar feudal lords, and thus convert Karabagh into a political and military base. Such a core would be the rallying point of all Armenians in their effort for national emancipation. This was the mentality of the political group of Madras under the influence of Moses Bagramian.

To this end, the group of Madras, for the first time in the history of the Armenians, decided to make use of the printing press as a means of disseminating its ideas. Accordingly, Shamir Shahamirian's son Hacob founded an Armenian printing plant in Madras, and presently, in 1772, a new pamphlet by Moses Bagramian entitled "Nor Tetrak vor Katchi Hordorak" (A New Pamphlet which is called Exhortations) saw the light. The theme of the book was the history of the Armenians beginning with ancient days up to the author's times. Yet, this booklet was not history alone, but an analytical study of the causes which brought about the loss of Armenia's independence, arriving at the conclusion

that the principal cause of Armenia's political downfall was its despotic form of government, namely the monarchy. For this reason in a future liberated Armenia this form of government should be rejected and should be replaced by a democratic form of government.

One year after the publication of Bagramian's booklet, the Madras press published another book entitled "Vorogayt Pharatz" (The Snares of Glory), a strange title indeed. Although the cover bore the name of Hacob Shahamirian, the real author of the book was his father, Shahamir Sultanum Shahamirian.

From the contents of the book it was apparent that the author was familiar with European political writers, such as John Locke, Montesquieu and others. The basic purpose of the book is to show the Armenians that, after the fatherland is liberated, what form of government shall prevail in Armenia. Like Joseph Emin, Shahamirian was primarily concerned with European, specifically English constitutional orders. In the preface of his book he speaks with admiration of George Washington who at the time was heading the revolutionary movement in America against the arbitrary rule of British governors. His book was published in 1773 when revolutionary forces already were in motion in America although they had not as yet reached the stage of armed revolution.

This is what Shahamirian writes in the preface of his book about the movement headed by George Washington.

"At present we hear of rumblings in America. A wise man by the name of Washington, born in America of British descent, having risen against their lords, and having rallied a militant force from the people, is trying to win freedom and to become independent. Although the outcome still hangs in the balance, the basic aspiration of the American people is only

natural to man, because there is nothing sweeter among the sayings of men than the word freedom."

Such thoughts are worthy of the most liberal-minded and most progressive-minded men of the 18th century. We can only marvel, and at the same time appreciate, that a semi-literate tailor with a very limited education could have been enthused with and could have absorbed the most progressive ideas of his era and could have exerted his efforts to disseminate these ideas among his people.

To Shahamir Shahamirian the right of the Armenian people to possess an independent fatherland is a perfectly understandable and inviolable right. Armenia shall be liberated some day from the foreign yoke. And since the Armenia of remote past was destroyed because of the despotic rule of Armenian kings, therefore, liberated Armenia shall no longer be ruled by an arbitrary, autocratic and monarchical despot but by a government which stems from the will of the people, namely a representative government. According to Shahamirian's "Vorogayt Pharatz" Armenia shall be a democratic republic, headed by a President. The laws of the land shall be initiated and passed by a Legislative Assembly whose members shall serve three years. The President shall be elected by the people's representatives, in other words, by the Legislative Assembly.

All the governmental functionaries, whether military, political or judicial, shall be elective. For the dispensation of justice, the courts shall adopt the British system of the sworn jury.

Shahamirian's "Vorogayt Pharatz" is also significant in that the ideas and the principles advocated in it had not been implemented at the time even in the governments of Europe.

The liberal principles drafted for the government of future Armenia were good

and well, but there still remained the problem of how to liberate Armenia so that these beautiful ideas could be enforced in it. This was the problem which confronted the Armenians of the 19th century.

### Russia's Descent to the Caucasus

The political designs of Peter the Great and Catherine the Second in regard to the Transcaucasus were realized during the 19th century. The 19th century was the century of Russia's conquest of Transcaucasia.

In 1801 the Russians occupied and annexed Georgia to the Russian Empire. As we have seen, it is true that the Georgians, like the Armenians, made frequent appeals to the Russian court seeking aid for their liberation from the Persian oppression. However, the primary aim of these appeals was to enable the Georgians to stand on their feet and to recover their independence through Russian aid. It was for this purpose that, as we have seen, the Russo-Georgian treaty of Georgievsk, 1783, was signed. Whereas, in 1801 Russia simply annexed Georgia and the Russian Emperor added one more title to his name as "King of Georgia."

It did not take long for the Georgians to be disillusioned of Russia. Scarcely ten years had passed, in 1812, when they revolted against the Russian rule, and although the rebellion was promptly squelched, there were several other attempts later on. The last attempt at rebellion took place in 1836.

And although the Georgians had been disillusioned of Russia, nevertheless the Armenians continued to retain their hopes on a Russian advance to the south. The Armenians' immediate desire was to be liberated from the Persian rule, and for this goal they were willing to make all kinds of sacrifices.

After the annexation of Georgia, for almost an uninterrupted period there was a

state of war between Russia and Persia. Thus, in 1804, after a series of victorious fights, a Russian division descended into the Plain of Ararat, laid siege to the City of Yerevan for two months, but having failed to capture the city it withdrew. In 1805 the Russians conquered Karabagh and Shirvan. For the second time they laid siege to Yerevan in 1808, but again having failed they withdrew. These military operations came to an end with the conclusion in 1813 of the Russo-Persian treaty by which Russia finally acquired Baku, Gandzak, Karabagh, Shaky and Shirvan. Having acquired Tiflis, Baku and Gandzak, Russia became the master also of the extensive Valley of the Kour River which extended from Tiflis to the Caspian Sea. On the other hand, having acquired the heights of Karabagh, namely the Little Caucasian Mountain Range which separates the Kour Valley from the Valley of Arax River, Russia's next step was to descend to the Arax, or the Ararat Valley, namely, the heart of Armenia.

At this time there was a huge Armenian population in Russian occupied Georgia and in Lori in the south. With the conquest of Karabagh a substantial Armenian population was added to those in Georgia and Lori. At this time the power lay to a certain extent in the hands of the Armenian Meliks who, in case of a war, were in a position to supply substantial military forces to the Russian army.

It was the wish of the Armenians who by now had come under the Russian rule that the Russians would conquer the remaining Armenian provinces of Persia as soon as possible. The chief exponent of this wish in 1814 was the Prelate of Georgia Armenians, Nerses Archbishop Ashtaraketzi. This clergyman, the most highly educated, statesmanlike and zealous leader of his time, was completely devoted to the single aim of seeing Armenia occupied by

the Russians as soon as possible, an aim for the realization of which he was eminently qualified. Aside from his liberal education, Ashtaraketzi had a fair knowledge of the Russian language, an invaluable asset which enabled him to maintain direct contact with the representatives of the Russian government. In the beginning of the 19th century there were few Armenians and Georgians who were familiar with the Russian language. Nerses Archbishop Ashtaraketzi and his associates were afraid that if the Armenians did not exhibit any extraordinary zeal, or make exceptional sacrifices, the Russians would not move to the south but would be satisfied with their acquisition of Armenian regions in Georgia. They did not seem to realize that the expansionist policy of the Russian Empire was pursuing the same aims which had been charted by Peter the Great, namely, having seized the Transcaucasus, via the Iranian and Turkish Armenias, to descend to the warm waters of the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean. The arrest of the Russian forward movement at Karabagh and Lori was only a temporary respite in order to consolidate the recent conquests, preparatory to the next move.

On the other hand, Ashtaraketzi, like his forerunners in the emancipatory movement, naively believed that the Russians were coming really to *liberate* the Armenian people. To help ease and to accelerate that *liberation*, it was assumed that the Armenian populace of the regions in question should be willing to make the maximum of sacrifices, morally, materially and physically. And precisely this was what Nerses Archbishop Ashtaraketzi thought and preached.

Iran sensed the great menace from the north and did everything to remove it, but the man who saw the magnitude of the danger and did his utmost to obviate it was Abas Mirza, the crown prince of Iran at the time.

Abas Mirza was an astute statesman, a good administrator, and a man of noble character who fully realized the value of the Armenian people to his country. For this reason, he always tried to give the Armenians a wider range of activity and greater privileges. To safeguard the Armenian population from the arbitrary actions and the oppressions of the Mohammedan governors, he raised the power of the Armenian Meliks by investing them with new rights and privileges. Knowing the Armenian people closely and their attachment to their church, he put a check on Mohammedan persecutions of the christians, and not satisfied with this much, he actually encouraged christianity in his realm. He often attended the Armenian churches, attended the ceremonies and religious festivals, and proved by his own example that the Armenian worship was worthy of all respect. He did everything in his power to win the heart of the Armenians for Iran and to remove their sympathy from Russia. No matter what the political aims he pursued, this much was certain that his sympathy toward the Armenians was entirely sincere.

Abas Mirza could not fail to realize that the peace envisaged by the Treaty of Gulistan was only temporary as far as the Russians were concerned, and that, sooner or later, they would resume their southward march. To forestall it, and to repel the Russian entry into the Transcaucasus, in July of 1826, without declaring war, Abas Mirza invaded the Russian conquered regions with an army of 60,000.

In these military operations Abas Mirza was supported by the Mohammedan population of Russian-conquered regions, much the same as the Russians had always expected and received the support of the Armenian population.

At the time of Abas Mirza's invasion the Russians had 35,000 troops all told in

the entire Transcaucasia who were stationed from Georgia to Karabagh, Gandzak and Baku. At no place did the Russians have a concentrated force. They had small regiments stationed in the villages and cities near Iran, and even Tiflis, the administrative center of Transcaucasia, had no more than a garrison of 3,000.

In this relative discrepancy of military force between the two contending parties the Armenian military aid to the Russians, naturally, was invaluable. As early as 1801 when the Russians occupied Georgia, the Armenians had supported the Russians wherever and whenever possible. The Russian conquest of Karabagh in 1805 was accomplished almost without bloodshed, chiefly as a result of the military forces of the Armenian Meliks.

The Armenian military support in the Russo-Iranian war of 1826-28 was even greater. When the war began, Nerses Archbishop Ashtaraketzi, the Prelate of Georgia Armenians, issued a call to his kinsmen in Georgia, Lori and Karabagh, exhorting them to spare nothing in order to insure the Russian victory. This call was responded to from all quarters. The Meliks of Karabagh organized volunteer regiments of Infantry and Cavalry. As a result of Ashtaraketzi's efforts, the Russian government, furthermore, financed the organization of Armenian volunteer battalions who operated under Armenian commanders. Even the language of the military commands was the Armenian, a circumstance which could not fail to flatter the Armenian national pride.

Not only the laymen but even the clergy took up arms to aid the Russians. Foremost among the latter was a Bishop named Grigor Manucharantz who at the head of his cavalry regiment waged many victorious fights against the enemy and was decorated by the Russian government. After the war, this brave shepherd of his flock

laid down his sword and retired to the St. Nishan Monastery of Varag near his native village of Hakhoum and resumed the life of a hermit.

As to Nerses Archbishop Ashtaraketzi, he left no stone unturned for the success of the Russians, himself taking part in the military operations. To him, the fight against Iran was as much, and even more so, a national fight for emancipation from the foreign yoke, as it was for the pursuit of Russian interests. His fervent patriotic calls found a responsive echo not only among the Armenians under Russian domination but among the Armenians under the Iranian rule.

At first surprised, and in the initial stages having been forced to sustain serious losses, the Russian forces reorganized themselves, took the offensive, and after a series of victorious encounters, occupied Yerevan, Etchmiatzin, Nakhitchevan and the entire plain of Ararat. Etchmiatzin was occupied on April 13, 1827, and Yerevan, the capital of present day Armenia, on October 1, 1827.

The Armenian regions of Iran which had been conquered by the Russians were called "Armianskaya Oblast" which means Armenian Province. To administer the newly-formed province a temporary executive was formed which consisted of three: General A. Krasowski, an Armenophile Russian of Ukrainian descent, Nerses Archbishop Ashtaraketzi, and the commander of the fort of Yerevan, Lieutenant Colonel Borodin.

For a moment, it seemed the Russians really were trying to realize the national dream which had inspired the Armenian political leaders for a full century, beginning with Israel Ori to Nerses Archbishop Ashtaraketzi. And indeed, all external appearances seemed to lend force to this theory. The Russians unified the former Khannates of Yerevan and Nakhitchevan



into the so-called "Armenian Province" (Armianskaya Oblast); the Russian government started to organize regular Armenian militia forces; and Ashtaraketzi himself was a member of the Executive Council of the Province.

Some of the Russian political and military leaders who headed the administration of the Transcaucasus were openly friendly to the Armenians and sincerely valued their devotion to the Russian cause. Foremost among these were General A. Yermolov, Governor General of Caucasus, and General A. Krasowski, Commander of the army. All these, however, were merely temporary, specious and illusive appearances which is no wise represented the basic Russian policy toward the Armenians, namely to profit from the Armenians by catering to their national feelings for the realization of Russian political aims in the Caucasus, and to abandon them the

minute their aim was achieved. During the period under discussion, this was the policy which was pursued by General I. Paskevitch, a pronounced Armenophobe who succeeded Yermolov and was Commander-in-chief of Russian armies in the Russo-Iranian war of 1826-28.

The policy of the Russian government toward the peoples of the Transcaucasus was determined by the degree of devotion and loyalty of those peoples toward Russia. Those who were sincerely devoted to Russia were ignored and even persecuted. This was the way the Armenians were treated. On the contrary, the Russians coddled those who never lost an opportunity to strike at the Russians in the back. These were the Mohammedans of the Transcaucasus whose sympathies were always with their kinsmen and coreligionist Iranians.

*(To be continued)*



# OH FOR THOSE GOOD OLD DAYS !

HAMASDEGH

"You deliberately stuck out that rod so that I would poke my eye into it. Isn't that so, Mukhsi? But I will tell you something, Old Mukhsi, I shall not die before I have buried forty old fools like you."

It was Menoush *Badji* — the old auntie of the village, raving on top of the flat roof of her home, as she picked the dried clothes from the clothes line. Old Mukhsi, just seated at his dinner table would listen to her ravings and was nervous. He would pause a moment, laying down his spoon, and would mumble fiercely: "Give me patience, O Lord, and the power to hold my tongue. The Devil tells me. . ."

"I want you to stop your brats coming to my side of the rooftop and ruin it. If I ever see them prowling on my side I will break their knees." Menoush *Badji* was referring to Mukhsi's grandchildren.

Old Mukhsi could stand it no longer. "You old witch, that will be enough from you. Once I get on my feet (and Mukhsi actually rose to his feet) I will show you that I am not afraid of any woman, not as long as I wear this mustaches." And Mukhsi swung around looking for his cane.

At this Menoush would pull off one of her slippers, striking a militant pose. and thus the ancient quarrel of the two oldsters in all probability would degenerate into another fight if, as usual, Mukhsi's son did not intervene.

The feud between Mukhsi and Menoush was nothing new. It had been going on for

exactly three years. Not a day passed that they did not confront each other, shouting, swearing, and making threats of dire consequences, whether it was on the rooftop or on the way to church. The neighbors knew nothing about the cause of this vendetta, nor did Mukhsi's son Arooth.

In those days Mukhsi was in mourning. Scarcely fifteen days before he had buried his sole companion in life — his wife. This was a heavy loss for Mukhsi because he had grown old on one pillow with Annik his wife.

Oh how good were those old days! In the summer when the whole village was busy in the fields threshing the grain, the two oldsters would sit on the threshold of their home and relax. And when the sun climbed high over their heads focussing its rays on the opposite wall, this time Mukhsi and Annik, together with their grandchildren, would mount the low rooftop, and reclining against the sunny wall, would surrender themselves to their peaceful relaxation.

There they would sit silently, indifferent to their surroundings which throbbed with life and abundance. Their grandchildren would frolic on the rooftop, riding their wooden ponies. Far in the distance could be heard the tumult of the toilers in the fields, the threshing of the harvest grain. At midday, as the shadows rolled, thick swarms of bees would pass over the heads of the old couple, leaving behind them the

dull symphony of a thousand stringed orchestra. Shading their foreheads with their hands, the old couple would follow the flight of the bees. It was important for them to know on what tree, or in what vineyard, they would settle down.

"Did you see which way they flew?" Mukhsi would ask.

"How can I see? Sakes alive! I am too old now, my eyes are weak, I only saw something like a shadow," Annik would reply.

"It seems to me they alighted on Markosentz elm trees."

"I only heard their buzzing."

"They alighted on Minassentz vineyard," put in one of the grandchildren who, having stopped their games, had been following the flight of the bees.

"Are you sure? Then they must be Arevikentz bees. Hurry, my lad, go to the threshing floor of Arevikentz and tell them that their bees are in Minassentz vineyard. Tell them to round them up before they have gone too far."

The grandchildren would make a dash for it, chasing the chicken on the way, in their eagerness to be the first to bring the news.

In the summer, when the village was deserted, this was one of the old couple's pastimes. After this service, again they would sit side by side. Presently, a couple of roosters, furiously pecking the ground, would flutter within the reach of Mukhsi's cane and would engage in a fierce fight. On such occasions Mukhsi was thrilled with a pagan delight. He even would encourage the fight by bringing the two roosters together. It was also on such occasions that Mukhsi tried his pranks on Annik. He would blow a cloud of smoke on her face, or, throwing his arm around her neck, he would muss up her headkerchief, or picking a knot of her scarf he would challenge: "Come now, Annik, let me see you snap off

this cord. Let me see if you still are strong."

Annik would grimace with her emaciated chin through her pale blue gums. She would seize the cord, in vain trying to tear it off, while the roosters fought on their miniature of ancient Navassardian games.

One day, however, on their way from church, Annik told Mukhsi that during the worship she felt a pain in her back. And Annik went straight to bed. Three days later she died a peaceful death.

Mukhsi felt lonely for the first time when, after his return from the cemetery, his daughter in law removed the deceased woman's bed. How he wished that they had died together because they had lived together in good or evil days.

One month later Mukhsi had completely forgotten his wife, much the same as all the dead are forgotten, yet he could never forget his loneliness. Now he was all alone as he climbed the rooftop, incited the rooster fights, joked with his grandchildren, or listened to the noisy humdrum of the threshing floor in the fields. He was lonely, oh so lonely.

One day seeing Menoush stretching a clothes line from his rooftop, Mukhsi stopped her. "Wait Menoush, that's isn't the way to tie a line," he offered wishing to be helpful. "I will go downstairs and bring an iron hook. That will make the line more firm."

Mukhsi brought the iron hook, fastened the line, and helped Menoush to hang the wash on the line. In the evening, when Menoush was picking the dried clothes Mukhsi approached her and offered to help her — a chore which he had never volunteered for his neighbors nor even to his wife. Menoush was surprised but said nothing.

Thereafter, each day, his back to the wall, Mukhsi would wait for the coming of Menoush. Mukhsi himself did not know why he waited. Was it not true that both

he and Menoush already were too old?

Mukhsi and Menoush had been neighbors for long years. Menoush had lost her husband long since, and now, nearly fifty, crouched in her little hut adjoining Mukhsi's, she eked out a living by spinning, baking bread, going to church each morning and evening.

One day, after baking the bread, Menoush climbed to the rooftop and raising her shrill voice — Joo . . . Joo . . . Joo . . . she was calling the chicken, while Mukhsi, leaning against the wall, was shuffling the beads of his rosary. That day Menoush's voice sounded sweeter than the liturgy in the church, especially since, wrapped as she was in her baking dress, she looked a bit more plump. Her face was flushed from the heat of the oven, and her forehead and face were beaded with drops of perspiration.

"Hello there, Menoush, what are you doing? Calling the chicken? Ah yes, one of your chicken crossed to yon courtyard," Mukhsi spoke in a shaking voice.

Menoush crossed over to Mukhsi's rooftop and again let loose with her shrill call.

"I see you have just got through baking your bread, Menoush. Why don't you come over and sit down beside me, good woman? There is such a thing as dying in this world," Mukhsi commented philosophicaly.

"What else can I do? As long as there is any strength left in us we must toil somehow to eke out a living."

"If you need anything, Menoush, just tell me. We are neighbors, after all."

Edging closer and stroking his mustache, Mukhsi continued: "Our harvest was good this year. If you need any grain I can supply you a few sacks. My son Arooth need know nothing about it."

Menoush was plainly suspicious now. From all sides, the courtyard, the high rooftop, and the stairways the chicken were

gathered now around Mukhsi and Menoush, fluttering around and looking for their seed, wholly oblivious of the tragedy which was about to burst wide open like a cloudbank pregnant with rain. Mukhsi had found the right moment to give expression to the thought which was in his mind. The whole village was busy at work. His grandchildren were playing in the street. There was no one else on the rooftop except the chicken.

"Ah yes. Thank God, like myself, you still are strong," Mukhsi pressed on, squinting his eyes. "As to your face, Menoush, it's just like a flaming rose."

Menoush had been right in her suspicion. Why didn't the skies collapse upon her? she wondered. Why didn't the sun go dark? Menoush who was a boistrous blustering woman was silent. What would the neighbors say when they found out? And hurriedly she scurried down the steps, leaving behind the flock of chickens.

Like a guilty school boy, Mukhsi regretted his act for a moment, remained rooted to his seat, and puckered his lips pretending to be whistling. He realized that such a joke was not proper for old folk. Still, what was the damage?

Were they not neighbors, after all? What was the harm in sitting together? This loneliness was more than he could bear.

The next day Mukhsi again was in his usual post, reclining under the sunny wall when Menoush, under the pretext of straightening the clothes line, clambered to the rooftop and in an intemperate outburst of shouts and oaths chased away Mukhsi's grandchildren from her side of the roof. The slipper she hurled after them came close to hitting Mukhsi on the head. Realizing the true cause of her anger, and greatly irritated, Mukhsi mumbled incoherently to himself. What would the neighbors say if they found out? He felt that it was

his fault and he held his tongue with great difficulty.

Another day Mukhsi's rooster perched on Menoush's partition, flapped its wings, stretched its long neck and started to crow. In a flash Menoush was on the scene. The rooster was terrified and flew away without finishing his cock-a-doodle. Mukhsi could see all this. How could he stand it any longer? Why did he sport that mustache if he could not act the part of a man?

"Why did you scare away my rooster?" Mukhsi shouted, choking with anger.

"Why did he perch on my fence?"

"He is going to perch there."

"He will not. If he does, I will cut off his head."

"If you do I will break your bones."

The argument might have resulted in a real fight had not the neighbors intervened. The neighbors of course knew nothing about the real cause of the hatred which drove the old couple at each other's throats.

Mukhsi pushed his grudge even farther. He incited his grandchildren to go over and ruin Menoush's rooftop, throw down the gravel and wreck the eaves. On such occasions Menoush would rush to the scene, fuming and foaming at the mouth, chasing the grandchildren, attracting the attention of the neighbors. With the passing of time this mutual hatred deepened. Mukhsi would not even tolerate the shadow of Menoush's wash on the clothes line. Woe be unto her if some day one of her chicken crossed to his side of the roof.

One rainy evening, wrapped up in a white sheet, Menoush mounted the rooftop to see the cause of a leakage and saw that the gutter which carried the water off the two roofs had been yanked out of its place. She straightened the gutter and went down. Scarcely she was gone when Mukhsi ascended the rooftop and removed the gutter to his side. When Menoush noticed

that the dripping had resumed she again ascended the roof. Instantly Mukhsi was on his feet and the two met each other at the edge of the rooftop.

"Don't you dare touch that gutter," Mukhsi warned angrily.

"You heathen! You spawn of hell! My bed is soaked in water," Menoush retorted.

"The gutter stays here, right here, do you understand?"

"I have been here in this home for thirty years and I have always seen that gutter right here."

"What do you know, you old witch? Ever since the days of my grandfather I remember that you have no right to put the gutter there. There are family deeds, there are courts of law, there is a government, after all."

There in the dark and the rain Mukhsi and Menoush were shouting at each other. "Once I get hold of you I will throw you down from the rooftop" Mukhsi threatened. Finally the neighbors came over and separated the two.

Thereafter, each rainy day, Mukhsi and Menoush watched each other, listened to each other's footfall, and kept up the bickering. The neighbors were tired of them both.

One night there was a terrific downpour. The villagers locked their doors and closed the shutters of the windows securely. Mighty cloudbursts shook the skies with deafening sharp blasts followed by a deep, dull rumbling. At intervals the darkness was pierced by blinding flashes of lightning. In the streets, a scrap of tin was being pushed by the wind noisily, or one could see an old overcoat yanked from the rooftops wrapping its sleeves on the branches of a poplar tree. That terrible night, Mukhsi and Menoush, like two ghosts, were fighting on the rooftop.

"The gutter stays here."



"It will not."

"It will."

In the scuffle Mukhsi's foot slipped and he fell down from the roof. The roof was not high, but Mukhsi's bones were old and he could not stand the shock. Thereafter he was confined to his bed. Mukhsi did not worry about dying. The thing which worried him was what people would say. How would they understand that he was afraid of no woman, that the thing was an accident, that his foot had slipped?

When the neighbors called on him, Mukhsi explained that the gutter was on their side of the roof ever since the days of his father. If he wanted he even could shut down Menoush's side of the roof. After all, there are documents, there are courts of law.

Along with the neighbors, one day the village priest called on Mukhsi.

"My son," the priest said, "Christmas is coming. This thing is not good. It does not become two old people like you. Come, let us make it up."

"Father, even if five inches of green grass should grow on my grave, again I will not make it up. I will not be reconciled to that old witch. Oh my aching back! You don't know that hag, Father. She drove her husband to the grave. Oh my aching bones! She is spiteful, Father, spiteful. You tell me, you have read the Narek. You are a wise man."

Mukhsi tried to sit up but the pain was too much for him and he again reclined on his pillow. "Tell me, she is a lone woman, has she any need of raising so much smoke from her chimney? What she is doing is sheer spite, sheer spite, Father. Take a look at it, my roof is contaminated with her smoke and the excretion of her chicken. My chickens never do such a thing on her side of the roof. Oh my aching back! Once I am on my feet again I know what I shall do. She knows that I can't move just now,

and that's why she keeps tramping on my roof as though the ceiling would come down. It is she alright and not someone else. There is so much to tell. How many shall I tell, how many shall I leave unsaid? No, Father, I would rather die than to make up with that woman."

In vain the priest pleaded with him, in vain he quoted from the Gospel. Mukhsi was not the man to become reconciled even if God Almighty came down from heaven with His fiery eyes.

In order to get well, Mukhsi wrapped his body in the hot pelt of a newly-sloughed goat, put a plaster on his back, and finally got on his feet.

It was Christmas Day. Mukhsi learned that Menoush had gone to church and partaken of holy communion. At this, Mukhsi was shocked and did not step inside the church for wholly two years. "It is a lie, Father, your church and your saints all are lies. How come God did not punish that woman in the church? How come He did not stop your hand when you were serving her the communion? How can I believe in such a church? I will not come to your church, I will die the way I am. Should God ask an accounting of me I am ready to answer him. Remember this, Father," Mukhsi complained to the priest when one day the latter was trying to take him to church.

Three years passed and there came the days of the dread deportations. The peasants had sensed the terror long since. They had seen the monsters and the wedding festivities, both ill omens, in their dreams. At midnight, before the first crow of Markossentz cock, all the doors in the village were securely locked.

There was general consternation in the village. The oxen were yoked to the carts. The animals in the stalls were uneasy with a strange fear, filling the air with their weird bellowing. The villagers were hastily

packing their essential belongings, one had shouldered his copper kettle, another was throwing down the bedding from the rooftop, a young mother had packed her baby and a bundle of dry bread to her back, another was clinging to her frying pan and the ladle. Munchik had rounded up his best looking pigeons in a cage of willow twigs.

And they all assembled at the threshing ground. No one knew where they were going.

The only man in this crowd who tried to look carefree was Hairapetentz Daniel. Dressed in his immaculate holiday suit, and posing as a man of the world, he mingled with the crowd cheering them and giving orders. They did not need to overload themselves with unnecessary equipment, he advised them wisely, because he had inside information that they were headed for real Armenia, somewhere near Bin Geol, where the honey flows like a river. He told them that he had been in those parts and had seen with his own eyes. He advised them to take along some caraway seed because where they were going was without this precious plant.

Mukhsi locked the door of his shack and put the wooden key in the folds of his waist. He asked his daughter-in-law if she had covered the skylight. He figured that the rainfall would soak the house, especially since he had not checked on the gutter. Mukhsi did not believe that he really was being separated from his home.

At a given order the caravan moved. Falling in line with the tragic creaking of the cart wheels the villagers left behind all their earthly possessions, their fields and vineyards, their cattle and their homes.

On the road new convoys of refugees from various villages merged with their own and swelled the multitude. The next night was the most heart-rending. The youths were segregated, the women were

hustled away, the mother took the road to the south and the son to the north. All this came like a strangulating nightmare. Mukhsi was shocked. He realized now that he was separated from his home and loved ones forever.

Where was Arooth? Where was his daughter-in-law? Where were his grandchildren?

And Mukhsi was jostled along with strangers to an unknown destination. Three days later, under the hot midday sun, as Mukhsi's caravan stopped for a little rest, far in the distance, crawling through the dusty fog, they saw another caravan approaching. Each time they saw a new caravan, they stopped and waited, seeking for some loved ones or acquaintances who could furnish some information about the fate of their kinsmen.

Leaning heavily on his wooden staff, the wooden key of the home neatly tucked in his waist, Mukhsi's eyes were glued to the new caravan which was approaching like a storm. When the two caravans merged, they asked questions of one another and some recovered their loved ones. Mukhsi was likewise asking questions, rolling his eyes over the crowd to see someone whom he knew. And presently, whom do you think he saw? Menoush!

Mukhsi's cane slipped from his limp hand, his body trembled, and stretching his arms wide open, he called to her as if the two were a married old couple.

"Menoush!"

"Mukhsi!"

Mukhsi and Menoush fell into each other's arms and cried like little children.

Mukhsi controlled himself with a supreme effort, and dabbing his eyes with his red handkerchief, said at last:

"Ah Menoush! Those were the good old days."

# COLLECTING ARMENIAN MANUSCRIPTS

H. KURDIAN

Often I have been asked by those who have seen my collection, "How and where do you find these ancient manuscripts?" To answer them a collector almost must tell them his life story.

There has been a lot said and written about collecting books, also about hunting and purchasing manuscripts. But books and manuscripts particularly of Western origin could be purchased comparatively in an easy manner, in all sorts of ordinary, and rare book stores, some obscure and some well known, almost in any part of Europe and America. But to collect ancient Armenian manuscripts . . . that is something else.

Collecting books as well as manuscripts has its thrills and surprises, also its disappointments. To chase a manuscript can be romantic or extremely tedious and wearisome, if not annoying. Collectors also, like the proverbial fisherman, always lament the ones that "got away."

Some collectors have large and sometimes unlimited financial means with which to pursue and to purchase the books they desire. And then there are others, like me who have nothing but a lot of ambition and some knowledge. There are times when I really deplore the fact that I have not the funds to secure the manuscript which I believe is the best find on a certain period of history available at the time.

During such times I feel very badly. My mind works feverishly to find a substitute

for money. Chances are I lose the manuscript offered me for purchase. I never blame the fact that I could not find the money to pay for it. I simply console myself by firmly believing that the owner of the manuscript is a scoundrel, that humanity is in a sad state of avarice, and sometimes I end up thinking that no one appreciates me.

There are no known shops, stores, and such places where one can purchase Armenian manuscripts. One could find them in any old or new book store, in antique shops, in auction rooms and in possession of all sorts of individuals.

Once I purchased a Sixteenth century "Four Gospels" on Madison avenue, in New York, from a peddler. Another time a total stranger sent me a small manuscript by mail from Brooklyn, which I purchased. The owner only stated that he was an American just returned from the Near East, and he was told that I was a purchaser of such manuscripts.

The first manuscript I ever purchased was from a book dealer in Constantinople in 1919 during a brief visit in that city. I was 16 years old, and was dressed, acted and looked the age. I believe this was instrumental in my being able to purchase this very valuable manuscript for less than one United States dollar. During those days in the same manner I was able to purchase a few other manuscripts of the Seventeenth century for a dollar or less each. The fact that I did not have more

than a dollar at any given time during that period perhaps explains why I was able to purchase them at a dollar or less. These manuscripts are still among the most cherished in my collection.

I should state that my father never liked the idea of his son degenerating into an old book collector. He knew me well, he said, and he did not think much of my ability to get anything for the dollar I was spending with those old and foxy dealers in the bazaar of Constantinople. It seems that it hurt his pride to see his son as a sucker in the ruthless clutches of world famous master dealers of what is now known as Istanbul. I even suspect that he was somehow mentally relieved to see me depart for New York in September, 1919. He must have thought, "Well, if this son of mine persists in carrying on his stupid game of being sucker to book dealers or other sharks, then no one can blame me when he is away from my protection." My father, God bless his soul, until his death in California, did not change his opinion about my book collecting. If I had gained any reputation as a book collector and connoisseur, he was sure it was simply because times had changed in the United States in particular and the world in general. It must be because people did not know as much as they should, and unfortunately they knew less than I did, although, it was hard for him to believe that this last could be at all possible.

I had hardly arrived in New York when I sent thirty or forty dollars to my mother in Constantinople to go and purchase for me eight Armenian manuscripts from a Greek antique dealer at the gate of the famous bazaar of Istanbul. My mother purchased the manuscripts and sent them to me without the knowledge of my father. I had seen these eight manuscripts during my various "sorties" in the bazaar, but the total sum asked for the manuscripts was

quite beyond my means, so I decided to defer the matter until such time when I could pay for them. One of these eight was a very rare Fourteenth century Armenian grammar book, with which was bound the oldest known Armenian dictionary.

My purchases of this period were a financial success because of my youthful age. In those days I still wore short pants. More than anything else, I am sure, it was the short pants which gave that unimportant, negligible purchaser look, inducing the dealers to ask their lowest prices knowing full well that I could not afford even that much. Perhaps this, and the fact that a boy in short pants could not select anything good in rare books were instrumental in quoting prices that even to me seemed low enough, although it forced me to examine the books very thoroughly, before I paid, to see if there was any other good reason for their amazingly low terms.

This purchasing habit, unfortunately, remained with me even after I grew up. Once, when returning from the Near East, in Paris, I located a forgotten bundle of Armenian manuscripts in the possession of a very well known antique dealer. I knew that he must have had some old manuscripts left from some purchases in the 1890's. After many trips back and forth a bundle was discovered containing about eight manuscripts. One of these was immediately removed from my sight as "very expensive." An old Byzantine manuscript did not interest me, although it was a very fine one and worth a lot. One of the remaining six was bound in very rare silver-enamel dated 1459. That was left for a future date. The remaining five were offered me finally for \$250. This was quite a reduction from the original price of \$1,000 which was asked, simply because I could not seem to pay more. When I had arrived in Paris I had just enough money to pay for my hotel bills. Staying awake until my depar-

ture for home did not solve my problem or raise the \$250. The year 1929 was still reverberating in 1931, so after my return to Wichita, six months had elapsed and I still did not have the \$250. The fact was conveyed to the owner of the five manuscripts in Paris.

Evidently the owner had his own troubles and he immediately wrote me asking how much I could pay right away. After careful calculation I sent him my check for \$64 informing him that it was all I could hope to have for a long time, and if he wished to accept it well and good, he could ship the manuscripts, if not, he could return my check.

He sent me the manuscripts. He also wanted to know whether I was still interested in the silver-enamel bound manuscript from 1495 A.D. I told him I was enclosing him another check, which I had earned by a stroke of good luck.

The amount of this check was so small that I am still embarrassed as I think of it. This rarest of the rare manuscripts now is famous, and one of the show pieces of my collection. Upon receiving this last manuscript I informed the owner that he could dispose of the Byzantine manuscript to certain people, and he could get about \$2,000, I was sure. That he did.

Thus some how I repaid him for the low prices I had paid for his manuscripts.

So much for an unfortunate habit that still remains with me from my younger days when I was wearing short pants.

To those interested I may say that I have a unique filing system of my own, in which any manuscript known to me is described on a card and filed in alphabetical order, using the name of the scribe.

This file, which is nothing but a short biographical dictionary of all Armenian scribes, illuminators, binders and paper makers of Armenian manuscripts known to me, has gained the attention of my friends

at the University of Chicago, and they desire to publish it. However, my list is far from being complete. Nevertheless, this file has worked miracles. For instance, I have been able to establish the fact that some certain leaves of a manuscript were stolen from a manuscript in the Armenian church of Tabriz, Iran, I have located others which have been offered for sale far away from their last known resting place.

One such manuscript recently was offered me from New York. The owner gladly sent it to me, through my bank in Wichita, for my examination. The price was \$2,000, a fatal price as far as my financial ability was concerned. Naturally, I did not purchase the manuscript, but I made a note in my card file that this particular manuscript had been in an Armenian monastery only a short time before. So I informed the owner, who excitedly recalled the manuscript, informing me that the book was not his. Later, in New York, he set another price, much lower than the original. However, I am not in a hurry, for I doubt if the manuscript will be offered on the open market.

About two or three years ago, a fairly presentable Armenian "Four Gospels" manuscript was offered in a most renowned auction room in New York. The date, due to ignorance, was marked one or two centuries earlier than its actual creation. I informed the auctioneer about the possible correct date of the manuscript with facts from my files. The correction was accepted and just before the auction was so declared by the auctioneer. The manuscript fetched less than the lowest price expected, but still more than I would have cared to pay.

Years ago a catalogue of Armenian manuscripts was sent to me to be reviewed, and my review was published. One manuscript in this catalogue was a copy of "Book of Job" on vellum, profusely illu-



minated in gold and colors, and with a full page miniature of bejeweled Job in Royal garb. However, someone had tampered with the date of the colophon, pushing it back as early as the first part of the Thirteenth century. Such falsifications are stupid as colophons always have enough historical data in them to establish the veracity of their dates. Acts of war, names of kings and other important personages, etc. Thus of course, I stated that the date of this manuscript was a falsification. As the manuscript belonged to an individual in Egypt I did not elaborate on the fact that the stupid falsification did not hurt the importance and the value of the manuscript which happened to be great. I only stated that the date of the manuscript was a deliberate fake. In 1937 Mrs. Kurdian and I happened to be in Damascus and quite unexpectedly in an antique shop we ran into this very manuscript. Casually I asked the price, and was asked to make an offer.

Upon this I inspected the manuscript only to discover that the manuscript was faked. The dealer immediately agreed, lamenting the fact that some writer in America had also noticed it and stated that fact in a publication, thus ruining all its good chance of fetching a high price. So the manuscript has remained unsold and undesired.

I told him that I also was not desirous to possess the manuscript. I also was very careful not to inform him that I was the unknown writer in America. Finally that afternoon the manuscript was sold to me when I finished purchasing a copper piece. It was a valuable manuscript which, undoubtedly, would have fallen into unappreciative hands, or would have been lost had I not been lucky enough to purchase it at a price I could afford.

Years ago in the USSR four silver bound, very rare manuscripts were offered to me at a ridiculously low price. I suspected

that after my purchase of the manuscripts I might not be able to depart with them from the USSR frontiers as the manuscripts would be taken from me. Thus I did not purchase the greatest bargains of my life. Eventually other factors justified my not purchasing them. In those days the Bolsheviks were disposing of a lot of rare books, rugs, paintings, and manuscripts to gain foreign currency to purchase what they called necessities. They were even willing to dispose of thousands of manuscripts that they had confiscated from the Armenian churches and monasteries. Evidently no one took the bait, for in the 1920's there was not many who would have purchased Armenian manuscripts at any price. Perhaps I was one of their test cases. Perhaps, because I did not pass the test, they dropped the idea. Never the less, those four silver bound 14th century manuscripts still haunt my day dreams.

Another time a very rare Armenian manuscript was sold to me in Jerusalem for \$17.50. I could not believe it myself. I had a suspicion that the manuscript must have been stolen from the important and rich collection of St. James Armenian monastery in Jerusalem. The manuscript which I could have quietly sent by mail to Wichita, was shown to the monastery. They could not recognize it, but eventually, to my complete satisfaction, it was proven that it was stolen from that monastery some eight to 10 years previously. Once this was established the manuscript was returned to the monastery.

However, in collecting manuscripts it is not very good to be so "nosy." The contacts that supply manuscripts like to operate without much inquiry or fanfare. They do not like to give information about the source of their manuscripts, even though the source is honest and legal.

A few years ago while I was in Cairo, Egypt, a prominent architect friend of mine

informed me that certain fathers of an Armenian Catholic Monastery in Lebanon were disposing of their manuscripts. One of them had shown to him a few for sale. My friend telephoned to the father and was informed that he still had some. So he made an appointment, informing the father that he would bring someone who would purchase them. Unfortunately I went with him to the appointed place. The father, who recognized me, courteously showed me the manuscripts, entertained me with the customary coffee, but said the manuscripts were not for sale. So I could not purchase them, even one that was very important to me. The same year I saw the same manuscripts in New York. They had been sold to another person, obviously not with my "reputation" as an inquirer.

The next year, knowing better, I purchased two very fine Armenian manuscripts on vellum, highly and beautifully illuminated and illustrated, sent to me from New York in a package of four Armenian manuscripts, all of them received from Paris. They unquestionably were from the same Armenian Catholic monastery in Lebanon.

Time and time again I have proven to myself that it is nice to keep to yourself what you know about the whereabouts of Armenian manuscripts. For some time I had been working to purchase in various part the collection of Armenian manuscripts of a New York rug dealer now deceased. I was able to purchase most of it. Then one day I informed a friend of mine who was visiting me in Wichita about two pieces of the same collection which still were missing. I found out later that my friend had quietly acquired the manuscripts, although he was not a student, nor a manuscript collector. I have more than one reason by now to believe that it is the best policy for a collector of manuscripts not to divulge the whereabouts of

any manuscripts except those that are firmly and securely incorporated in his collection.

Not long ago no one in this country was particularly interested in collecting Armenian manuscripts. Today, unfortunately, the number of public and private purchasers has increased alarmingly, and most of them pay without the financial pains I suffer. This is not very good. However, one with a real knowledge of Armenian manuscripts can still purchase extremely valuable pieces in this field at relatively bargain prices.

A few years ago I purchased three very important manuscripts after they had been sent and offered to almost every great library in the United States. One of these three manuscripts is the oldest known, profusely illustrated copy of "Romance of Alexander." Another copy of the same work fifty years later than mine, now is one of the rare possessions of the John Rylands Library of Manchester, England. Another of these purchased three was a copy of the "Four Gospels" written and illuminated by one of the very celebrated scholars of 13th century Armenia. It is the second known work from his pen, and the only one illuminated by his hand. Yet unrecognized, these manuscripts had wandered from library to library without being recognized and purchased. Upon my anxiety to secure one of the few extracted leaves of the manuscript at a sum of \$175 was asking much of me. On a later occasion an institution was willing to pay a high price for the same manuscript which must have been offered to them for a very small one.

That errors are still made in describing Armenian manuscripts, I am certain, for Armenian manuscripts are still blind articles for the average purchaser. One must know a lot to be able to get the full value of his manuscript. Accordingly the purchaser has to know a great deal to be

able to purchase a very good one at the price of poorer ones. Last year a manuscript was purchased by me for a very small price because the dealer never knew that it was scribed by one of the great Armenian scholars. In New York I purchased a law book for \$12.50, although I would have paid \$125 for it. In Paris, I purchased for a small sum an illustrated "Four Gospels" because the colophon was missing and the owner had been told that it was an unimportant and late manuscript when actually it was from the 1420's and very important for its illustrations. A similar manuscript was recently purchased by the great Armenian oil king Calouste Gulbenkian, the Lord knows for how much. This, however, from the same illustrator as mine, had a detailed colophon.

There are times when comparatively unimportant manuscripts are presented as unique and important. Years ago, a London rare book dealer sent me photographs of an Armenian manuscript dating from the 13th century. From a photograph of a miniature of this manuscript which had a small colophon on the lower margin, I established the fact that the said manuscript was dated 1596, and so I informed the London book dealer. He would not believe me because the manuscript had been exhibited in Paris as a manuscript of the 13th century. Of course eventually he discovered the error and thanked me in a letter for the correction. I have noticed a number of similar errors in this country.

On one occasion pages of an Armenian manuscript of 1670 were innocently offered as pages from the 12th century or thereabouts!

In conclusion, I believe that collecting manuscripts, particularly Armenian manuscripts is a serious thing, especially when one's finances cannot withstand any blunders. Although manuscripts cannot be faked, they could be misrepresented. They could be altered to represent an older age than they possess, however, this is never successfully "put over" on an expert.

Last year in London I heard of a more dangerous tampering with Armenian manuscripts. An Armenian manuscript was sold at auction, and I was interested in seeing it. My agent there informed me that the manuscript had been given to a "restorer" to restore the miniatures which evidently had suffered during the centuries. When I expressed anger at this sacrilege, my surprised agent said: "Well, they restore paintings, rugs, furniture, why can't they restore manuscripts illuminations?"

If you still want to make a collection of Armenian manuscripts, please remember all this. I have done my best to discourage you. As it is, there are more buyers than I care to know in this once "heavenly" market of Armenian manuscripts. If you must collect something, do me a favor and collect milk glass, buttons, stamps, pictures . . . anything, only stay away from Armenian manuscripts. I am still collecting them.



# ARMENIA and ROME BETWEEN 200 B.C. AND 325 A.D.

## PART II

DR. ARSHAK SAFRASTIAN

### ARMENIA ALONE STOOD AGAINST ROME AND DEFENDED THE EAST

#### 1. How that history has been written and how it should be written.

By the time Rome came into contact with Armenia about the year 100 B.C., it had had a fairly reliable history for only three centuries; nevertheless, there are now innumerable books and series of portentous volumes on its history and civilization in many languages; whereas by then Armenia had possessed a recorded history and civilization for twenty centuries. But hitherto, one could hardly find any appreciable notices on Armenia in respectable historical textbooks. On the contrary, even advanced classical studies go only so far as to bring Armenia on the world scene only with King Artashes, and he at first as "one of the governors of Antiochos the Great, the king of Seleucid Syria, about 191 B. C.", thus entirely overlooking the 2000 years of the recorded earlier Armenian history.

This presentation of the case shows that there is a fundamental error in classical tradition which vitiates the historical content of the Ancient East, and which is merely due to an utterly false account reported by Herodotos<sup>1</sup> in regard to the racial origin of the Armenian people.

<sup>1</sup> John L. Myres: Herodotos, Father of History, 1953. In this valuable study just published, Sir John Myres, the veteran classical scholar, analyses the essence of Herodotean "historiography" (p. 75): "His (Herodotos) habitual word for his and other people's (i.e. Greek) writings is *logos*." (p. 70): "... The word *logos* ... means

This infamous fable of the "Father of History" has driven an unreal breach between the multimiliary historical and cultural background of Armenia, between the Khurrian and Khaldian Armenia and that of the Artashes-Tigranes era, thus occasioning an ethnographical chasm which historical science has hitherto wavered to bridge. This part of my study will show that under the patronymics Khurri (Khorkhorunik) and Khaldia (Haik) the Armenian race has been in physical occupation of its native land without any ethnological or any other breach.

To explore and explain this deplorable breach, to reconstruct the real foundations of authentic Armenian tradition and represent the latter in an intelligible manner, it is essential to refute the Herodotean fable by a short narrative of historical events of the relevant period (ca. 733-585 B.C. and downwards) in order to pave the way for writing a documentary history of King

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simply 'what is said', only that this was how the tale was told. Its use implies nothing as to the truth or significance of 'what was said'; only that this was how the tale was told ... Nor is the teller responsible: it is his part to recite the tale 'as it is told' ... But any *logos* may be told in various contexts ... Herodotos is a supreme artist in story-telling ... "etc. Therefore, Herodotos' story (VII. 73 that "*the Armenians were equipped exactly like the Phrygians, being settlers from Phrygia*") is a typical *logos*, and certainly altogether false. Knowing nothing about it, he fabricated it himself, in order to appear omniscient. cf footnote 5, later on.

Tigranes the Great and his statesmanlike dealings with the Romans and their final repulse on the banks of the western Euphrates. Otherwise, the Armenia of Artashes (ca. 200-160 B.C.), of Vagharshak and Tigranes would look like a mere accident, an ephemereal appearance sprung out from the unknown without much content and meaning.

A short sketch of the history of Rome down to about 110 B.C. was presented in the previous issue of *The Armenian Review*. An identical review of the Armenian background, which would lead to the era of Tigranes, is logically called for because otherwise it would appear as a phantom castle hanging in the air without angular stones and cement.

One must learn the antecedents of the proposition before one can objectively appreciate the social and political atmosphere of the period under discussion. The main task of the historian who sets out to write the history of ancient times, is to reproduce in as far as the written sources allow, the economic, social, and political atmosphere of a century, and interpret a definite phase of it in the light of earlier and subsequent experiences. As a rule such a task is a difficult one.

First and foremost, it requires an accurate personal knowledge of the geography, economics and the social organization of the lands which are the subjects of study, and which in their turn determine more or less the character of the nations living in them. Secondly, it requires a thorough and dispassionate study of ancient literature, i.e., the unvarnished early sources, national or foreign, which deal with the traditions of those peoples, their political records and cultural achievements.

Perhaps no epoch in ancient history is more favorable for such a comprehensive study than that of Armenian-Roman Relations and the eventual armed conflict in

the first century B.C. and later, because that period, which coincided with the last anarchical stage of the Roman Republic and the establishment of the empire under Octavianus-Augustus is fully and severally described by Sallustius, Cicero, Titus Livius, Cornelius Tacitus, and other contemporary eyewitnesses, who themselves often took part in the events they describe. Besides, there are near-contemporary sources in Greek and somewhat later Armenian records, although often short and summary-like, yet they, especially the latter, accurately amplify and control the Roman sources.

No historical study of this most interesting period should be accepted as true or complete if the historian draws the picture of those events by a lop-sided reference to one or another section of the historical sources mentioned, without taking notice of the contention of the opposite party or parties. If any historian has neglected his fundamental scientific canon of historiography, he will be neglected in these pages. After a very active forensic life, during which he held the magistracies of praetorship and consulship in Rome, Marcus Tullius Cicero, the greatest Roman orator and patriot, laid down the laws of accurate history (*lege historiae*) in 55 B.C., in a year when the city of Rome and the Republic were drifting in the throes of famine and complete anarchy.

He says (Cicero: *de Oratore*, Book 11.15):

"For who does not know that the first law of history is that the historian should dare to say nothing false? The next, that he should not be afraid to say all that is true? That there should be no suspicion of favor in his writings, none of personal animosity. These fundamental rules are known to all, while the superstructure itself depends on facts and style; the character of



subject-matter requires attention to dates and descriptions of countries. . ."

Just over 2000 years ago the greatest man of character produced by ancient Rome, who knew the entire Hellenic literature and had seen the light, had the courage to practice in his own orations and writings what he loudly preached at a very dangerous time, of course often in as far as it was in consonance with the responsibility of a high magistrate and with his extremely difficult posture as between the military stalwart Julius Caesar, Cnaeus Pompeius, and the lesser fry of the kind. Even then, Cicero, who as a young man spent two years in Western Asia Minor and the Aegean islands to study oratory, seems to have formed a high opinion, almost approaching admiration, for everything Armenian, for the well-ordered and prosperous Armenian monarchy, the majestic personality and generosity of their great king Tigranes and their valiant army. There will be shown later on documentary evidence of this with an hitherto unpublished portrait of Tigranes.

The geographical and cultural background of Europe, the continuous cultivation of Greek and Roman literatures for many centuries would irresistibly incline the western historian of ancient Rome to take sides in a pronounced style.

When an uncritical writer reads in Plutarchos, for instance, that the great king of Armenia just laid down his crown at the feet of a braggart like Pompeius, he and others like him have repeated false history so often that they have come to believe it as a historical fact. Europe has borrowed the Latin alphabet, the basic principles of Roman law and the Greek ideas of "freedom." These powerful influences which have shaped European cultural and political character are obvious to any student.

It is therefore an invidious task to try

to assess as to how far the classical scholarship of the last two centuries has followed the laws of historiography as laid down by Cicero two thousand years ago. Having regarded ancient Greece and Rome as their own, naturally most western historians have treated their ancient history with sympathy and not without considerable impartiality. On the other hand, however, there has been no lack of specialists of classical texts who have exercised their wits to prove many of their falsehoods; and not a few who have had the intellectual probity to raise the curtain from before some of the inhuman aspects of Roman politics and the other Roman traits of viciousness. Even then, among the latter class of specialists, there runs a red thread, an overtone of preference for Roman ways and a sense of "ourness".

Let it be repeated that such a general outlook pervading the modern classical studies is both natural and proper: that western countries should take up an attitude of aloofness to problems of Roman-Armenian relations, when the hardly-known equation of a barbarian<sup>2</sup> eastern country is confronted with that of Rome.

Firm in the secular traditions of his native country and its generous outlook towards all mankind, this writer will by no means treat the Armenian side in narrow nationalistic perspective. He knows from personal experience that an accurate interpretation of ancient history is the most reli-

<sup>2</sup> Herodotos applies the term to all Europe also, including of course the Romans, a name which does not occur in the text of the "Father of History." The word is explained as meaning all those who did not speak Greek. This explanation hardly seems satisfactory. In an essay in outline, the writer has tried to trace the origin of the word either in Babylonian or the Khaldian-Haikian language. In a distorted orthography the original form of the word must have been borrowed by the Ionians or Lydians from whom "Homeros" learned it at a later time. If the etymology suggested in the essay turns out to be correct, then at the origin it must have connoted an admiration or envy of the shining weapons and helmeted horsemen of the great monarchies.

able guide for the present and the future and that its detailed study is a dynamic factor in the life of a nation, the more so when the national history is one of the cleanest and inspiring records in the world. The immediate reaction which will automatically arise in the mind of a reader taught by stereotype historical books is likely to be something like this: "But Rome created a vast and civilizing empire from almost nothing, whereas Armenia, isolated in its highlands, had contributed almost nothing to the stock of human progressive knowledge on the contrary, it had to struggle throughout for a place under the sun." This is of course the traditional teaching based primarily on Hellenic logography, built up in the course of centuries and repeated literally by hundreds of school textbooks.<sup>3</sup> As to the value of "world empires", outside their ethnographical and natural boundaries, opinion has varied from the outset. What concerns "the civilising role" of the Roman empire in East and West, the Latin texts to be cited in later part will speak for themselves.

## 2. The gap between the traditional and scientific history of Armenia

It should be clearly understood that the western concepts of Armenia in general and of its national eponym, history, political and social position in the ancient East in particular, had been crystalised long before the Hittite, Khurrian, Khaldian-Haik-

ian, Assyrian and other original sources were recovered and interpreted. As already stated those conceptions are very old, whereas cuneiform documents referred to above have come to light and have been partially utilized in the last half century. In the light of these cuneiform sources, the Greek and other ancient data regarding Armenia have proved to be entirely inaccurate both in the actual facts they record and in the interpretations they place upon those facts. The upshot of it all is that from year to year a great gap is developing between the disciples of classical scholarship on one side, and archaeological discoveries and research on the other. The gap thus created will widen in proportion as the science of the cuneiform records brings out yearly new positive knowledge by the publication of new texts; whereas classical scholarship seems to have reached a stage of saturation, having almost exhausted its literary source-material.

Upholding Herodotos as its fountain of information in regard to the origin of the Armenian race, classical philology still maintains the theory of Phrygian origin; that is to say, it asserts that some Phrygian colonists at an unascertainable period (usually dated between 700-600 B.C.), marched from their lowlands across the territory of much stronger Cappadocia, "conquered" the Armenian highlands, and coalescing with the native population, formed the Armenian nation. This is a mere fable sharply contradicted by the contemporary written documents of the Khaldian-Haikian kings and the cuneiform inscriptions of the neighboring kings of Assyria and Babylonia. Only a few facts will be mentioned here to refute the theory of Phrygian origin.

King Ishpuini and his son and successor Menua (ca. 823-775 B.C.) pushed the Khaldian-Haikian arms to the rim of the northernmost plain of Assyria, the natural boundary of their land in their own con-

<sup>3</sup> In their ten volume monumental *Histoire de l'Art dans l'Antiquité*, (vol. V, 1890, p. 3) G. Perrot and C. Chipnietz say: "Les Arméniens n'ont jamais eu d'art qui leur appartient en propre, et l'on ne trouvera pas dans cette histoire une page où leur nom soit inscrite"; whereas they have given 235 pages to the Phrygian art, and 480 pages to the Persian art. O Shades! would exclaim the poet. In 1890, the great French art-historians could not perhaps have done much else. Archaeological science and first hand specialist researches have now changed all that. Heaven be witness that what is called Phrygian is purely Hittite, and what is called Persian is primarily Armenian, Elamite and Babylonian.

ception, and to the western Euphrates of Baghin and near Malatia.

Kings Argisti I and his son Sardur III (ca. 775-733 B.C.) pushed the frontiers of their land to the Amanus passes, and to Cappadocia, although the latter king erected his famous stele at a village called Isoli today, just on the left flank of the Euphrates, not very far from the city of Malatia.

King Rusa I and his son Argisti II (ca. 733-685 B.C.) fought both the Assyrians and the Kimmerians in Cappadocia. The latter king after conquering the Kimmerians, took a large number of them as soldiers in the Khaldian-Haikian army. King Sankherib-Senekerim of Assyria (705-691 B.C.) refers to these Khaldian-Kimmerian conflicts, and secret reports of Assyrian intelligence officers supply very interesting incidents on the Armenian-Assyrian frontiers.

King Rusa II (ca 685-645 B.C.), the son of the former, enjoyed a long and glorious rule over the largest extent of historical Armenia. Lehmann-Haupt<sup>4</sup> rightly calls him *restitututor imperii Chaldici* ("the restorer of the Khaldian-Haikian empire"). Under the previous reigns of Rusa I and Argisti II, some frontier provinces had suffered damage as a result of violent conflicts with Assyrians and Kimmerians. Rusa II fought the Mushki, the Khatini (the remnants of the Hittites living in the basin of the river Halys and further west) and the Alizons. These Alizons may probably be the Khaldian form of the river Halys, and the tribe of the Khatini may refer to the natives of the land which Herodotos has made into Phrygia. As far as the present

knowledge from cuneiform documents go, it seems that King Rusa II had a diplomatic quarrel with King Ashshurbanipal of Assyria (688-629 B.C.). Although the tablet is partly broken off, it appears that Khaldian and Assyrian political refugees had sought shelter in the principality of Shupria, the subsequent province of Dzopk (see geographical list later in this article).

The Assyrian king wrote to Rusa II; other details cannot be made out clearly; it was likely that it was in this connection that King Rusa II sent ambassadors to Ashshurbanipal in about 654 B.C. to greet the Assyrian king. Excavating the ruins of the famous church of Zvartnots in 1901, Khachik Vardapet Datian brought to light the great stele bearing the same name and altogether intact. On this magnificent monument, polished and inscribed, King Rusa II has recorded his constructive exploits in the plain of Airarat, quite close to Etchmiadzin, in his rich mother-tongue, which was Khaldian-Haikian, and which we now call the classical Armenian *grappar*.

Hitherto, there are no cuneiform records from King Sardur IV (ca. 645-625 B.C.), the son and successor of Rusa II. On completing a final conquest and destruction of the Kingdom of Elam by successive campaigns in about the year 640-39 B.C., King Ashshurbanipal of Assyria achieved the aim of his dynasty, i.e., to put an end to the constant attacks or threats of attacks of the Elamites on the borders of Assyria. In his several display-inscriptions, the mighty Assyrian king mentions the two Armenian ambassadors whom King Sardur had sent to Ninua to greet him on his victory. This last great king of Assyria has immortalized the visit of the two Khaldian-Haikian ambassadors by depicting on bronze plates their ceremonial reception in his Court. The proud figures of the ambassadors may be seen today in the Nimrud Gallery of the British Museum. The visit of the Armenians

<sup>4</sup> *Armenian einst und jetzt*, (Vol. II, part 2, 1931, pp. 856-57). In the same volume, p. 687, Lehmann-Haupt has presented his final assessment in regard to the order of succession of the Khaldian-Haikian dynasty, and the probable dates of the kings. Many new facts have since come to light, which necessitate slight corrections of his order and dates. These cannot be discussed here.

to Ninua must have flattered the Assyrian king to such a degree as to induce him to render it memorable by artistic representation.

Except for his name, we do not know anything of King Erimena (Aramaneak-Armenak?) mentioned by his son King Rusa III (ca. 620-585 B.C.), who has left a highly artistic votive shield, decorated with pictures of lions and birds. This shield fragment is now preserved in the British Museum.

These original sources of Armenia's history in the first millenium B.C., buried under the soil or recorded in cuneiform script on extant slabs of rocks, were not discovered and studied — because they could not be read and understood — until the last quarter of the last century. They were written by god-fearing kings or their equally pious priestly scribes, who believed that the art of writing was a divine gift. The reliability of history is vouchsafed for also by the contemporary kings of Assyria and, none the less, by Movses Khorenaci, the national historian of the fifth century A.D. in many remarkable particulars.

Thus the unbroken continuity of Khaldian-Haikian race over the entire extent of its mountain homeland, leading a very vigorous and active life throughout, has been proved beyond any possible doubt. If the Assyrian and Persian could not find room in rich and prosperous Armenia for their colonists, still less chance was there for the weak and fantastic Phrygian colonists to do so. Then, what value can be placed on a casual remark of Herodotos as to the Phrygian colonists?

The recorded evidence which is reproduced above proves on the contrary that kings Argisti II, Rusa II and possibly Rusa III invaded Cappadocia and Phrygia, garrisoned the fortresses, and probably planted colonists among them, and not the reverse. Besides, when the choice of credibility lies

between the mighty and loyal Khaldian-Haikian kings or the Assyrian Ashshurbanipal on the one side, and Herodotos, a vagrant merchant of gems eager to tell haphazard tales,<sup>5</sup> the impartial student will decide for kings Argisti-Artashes and Rusa-Arshak. But this first hand knowledge of the history of Armenia was not available to western historians or publishers of classical texts in the sixteenth or nineteenth century. Consequently they had to rely on Herodotos and his followers for tracing the origin of the Armenian race to Phrygian colonists. Hence has arisen this historically false and utterly unfounded theory of the racial origin of the Armenians.

This digression on the theory of Phrygian origins was necessary in order to lift the fictitious light spread over the luminous horizon of Armenian ethnology and oust, root and trunk, that alien intrusion from the record of Armenia which for centuries has weighed down the noble character of national life. Not that the nation itself knew anything about it from its own historical sources — except a doubtful phrase in the words of Anania Shirakaci, the mathematician and astronomer of the 7th century, who records it as a curiosity. But the outside world adopted the Herodotian tradition and drew altogether unfounded conclusions from it, which until today stand in the way of scientific presentation of epigraphic facts, that is to say a historical correlation of Armenia at the time of Tigranes the Great with those of the Khurrian

<sup>5</sup> *Herodotos, VII. 152*: After giving a muddled account in long paragraphs of the alleged negotiations between Xerxes and Argos, the Father of History strikes for an astonishing self-revelation: "... For my own part, however, I am in duty-bound to give all the stories that are told, but not any the more at all bound to believe them; and let this remark hold good for all my history." In this study, I have taken Herodotos' confession at face value, and have indeed rejected all his false assertions in regard to Armenia. In his book on Herodotos mentioned in footnote I, Myres does not refer to the Armenian origin, because he knows the facts.

and Khaldian-Haikian dynasties, of their common language and civilization.

About a century ago a similar blight dominated also over the histories of Sumeria, Akkad-Babylonia and Assyria. A queen Semiramis of Assyria was supposed to have invaded India, and the noble city of Babylon was represented as a hotbed of wickedness; whereas, the native royal records of those countries excavated and studied in the course of the century have revealed a continuous ordered life and great cultural achievements for about one and one half millennia (ca. 2000-538 B.C.).

The immediate objective of Armenian archaeological studies should be to revise the history of the land in the light of this documentary knowledge and reincorporate the Khaldian-Armenian identity into the framework of the ancient civilized East, as enlightened by the recent research of specialists.

### 3. Incorrect ethnicons of Armenia

It is one of the strangest phenomena in world history that from the outset of recorded history even the nearest neighbors have given national eponyms to Armenia which are altogether unknown to native tradition.

The Hittite kings (ca. 1700-1200 B.C.) alone knew correctly the name of the land and the people, whom they called Khurrians; whereas, many dynasties in the southern plains, Sumerians, Akkadians and Babylonians, named it Supartu or the variants; the Assyrians used geographical terms, Nairi-lands, and later on, Urartu, which hitherto are unknown in native records. The eponym Armenia, applied by the whole world — except by the Georgian neighbors of the Armenians — for the last twenty-five centuries, is altogether unknown in national tradition, except in one line of Khorenaci's *History* of the Haik, where he says that Greeks called the Armenians Armen, Syrians and Persians, Armmik. It cannot be de-

nied that the giant tableland does not offer easy access to outsiders into its many mountain gorges and valleys and great swift-running rivers. Look at the majestic panorama of the Haikian highlands from the southwest, east, or from whichever direction you may look at; from the region of Aleppo, Tell-Halaf, Mosul, or any vantage-ground along the course of the Euphrates, which violently has cut its channel through the Taurus rocks and has turned to the southeast to form the one convenient highway between Syria and the Tigris valley, and you will realize the feelings of awe and mystification which those mountain ranges of various altitudes, often scintillating in dark-blue or green tints, have inspired in the observer standing in the sandy plains of the south.

This may be one of the causes which has curbed inquisitive persons from the outset to venture into the provinces of Armenia in order to learn the actual conditions prevailing in the tableland. The difficulties of language, of social intercourse, and religious prejudices, would have stood in the way of mutual acquaintance, although speaking generally, there is no doubt that the peoples of the great established monarchies, recognizable by their sovereign dynasties, religious heirarchies and military power, had great regard for each other.

As the monarchies of ancient Iraq had no possibility of learning the actual facts otherwise, they chose the name of the city or district which lay nearest their own land and stamped it on the whole extent of the northern *terra incognita*<sup>6</sup> no matter how far it stretched, or what lay behind those ominous peaks, and still less how the native people named it. "The peoples of

<sup>6</sup> E. Oberhummer (*Petermann's geographische Mitteilungen*; 1935, p. 136) reviewing this author's study on the itinerary of Xenophon's retreat, wrote that: "*Den Griechen war das Armesische Hochland völlige terra incognita und ist uns auch heute nur mangelhaft bekannt. . .*"



the ancient east," as Weidner <sup>7</sup> tersely puts it, "had no maps, and at least in the earlier period, the knowledge of the earth with most of them did not go beyond the horizon of their own dwelling places. . ." Thus, the early kings of the Sumerians and Sharukin of Akkad seem to have coined *Subik-Subartu* as a geographical designation for the northern tableland from the name of the city *Nsebi-Siba* or the neighboring *Mdzbin-Nisibin*, <sup>8</sup> the great fortress city of old commanding the main roads south of the main Taurus spurs.

The history of the ancient East is to be reinterpreted not only in texts but still more in minute and accurate knowledge of topography. Several of the kings of Assyria have described their invasions into the lands of Urartu-Khalidia. They mention dozens of placenames they claim to have conquered. Some of the historians of ancient Assyria seem to have failed to grasp the fact that almost all — except two — of those much-discussed Assyrian invasions of Khalidia touched only the fringe of the lower slopes of the Highlands, districts the ownership of which was contested between Haikians and Assyrians. Only two Assyrian monarchs, *Tukul-ti-apli-Eshshara III* (745-728 B.C.) and *Sharukin II* (722-705 B.C.), succeeded in penetrating the center of the Highlands, both in ephemereal raids of no great consequence. For fear of being sur-

rounded and destroyed, both of these Assyrian kings beat a quick retreat before their escape-route could be blocked by the fast-moving Khaldian cavalry.

The object here is not to present relations between Khalidia and Assyria, but specifically to outline some reliable historical precedents of Armenian cavalry tactics which Tigranes the Great and Artavazt employed against Lucullus and Pompeius, the Roman commanders, more than six and one-half centuries later, because the historical configuration, the material means and technical resources of a country determine that country's national-military strategy for all time, regardless even of much improved and advanced offensive weapons used by the enemy. King *Sharukin II* of Assyria, mentioned above, betrays the consternation of his really brave army when, advancing through Persian *Atrpatak-an*, he came within sight of the border regions of the giant *Massis*. Says the Assyrian monarch:

"On Mount *Uaush*, a great mountain which lifts its summit into the region of the clouds in the midst of the heavens where, since the beginning of time, the seed of humankind had not passed, no . . . have found his way, to the top of which no bird that wings its way across the heaven had (ever) come, to . . . a mountain peak which stands up like the blade of a dagger, and gullies and mountain precipices . . . in the severe droughts (P) of summer and the bitter cold (of winter) . . . their flash (is) on which snow is heaped up day and night, and its . . . are covered (P) with sleet and ice; the body of him who passes along its side is . . . while . . . burns his flesh; here he (the king of Urartu) mustered his great host, together with his allies and assembled his picked fighters, strong in battle . . . ; on their prancing riding horses he mounted them and gave them (their) weapons . . ." etc.

<sup>7</sup> Ernst Weidner, "Das Reich Sargons von Akkad. In *Archiv fuer Orientforschung*, XVI (1952) page 1: "Sie (die Bewohner des Alten Orients) haben ja keine karten besessen nur bei den meisten von ihnen sind wenigstens in der fruehzeit die kentuesse von der erde sicher nicht ueber den Horizont ihres wohnortes binans gegangen. . . ."

<sup>8</sup> Mattheos Urhaeci, *Chronography*. For thirty years the priest of the Armenian cathedral of Urha-Edessa, Mattheos carefully distinguished between the two placenames which seem very much like each other: the second ed. of the text (1898, *Vagharshapat*), pp. 14, 18, 25, 60, *et passim*. It is impossible to go into details here. E. Dulaurier has translated into French the *Chronography* of Urhaeci (first half of the 12th century).

Other Assyrian kings have spoken of the peaks of the Armenian mountains as "blades of daggers" and of narrow forest-covered defiles, but King Sharukin's description is more dramatic, and perhaps natural enough for a southern plainsman. It is just likely that his emphasis on the winter cold and summer coolness of eastern Armenia aims at covering the failure, or very small success, of his campaign, on which he had founded great hopes. As will be shown in the next section of Armenian-Roman military conflicts, Licinius Lucullus, just in the same manner, apologized to the Senate of Rome for his defeat in 68 B.C. at the banks of the Euphrates, near Malatia. The Roman commander wished to march on Artashat, royal capital of Armenia; but his Graeculi historian Archias reported that the Legions frightened at the cold, mutinied, and would not advance; whereas the fact is that Lucullus was so thoroughly thrashed by the mail-coated cavalry of Armenia that he bolted, took shelter at Nisibis, and reported to the Senate his flamboyant "victories."

#### 4. Climate, landscape, and wealth

Innumerable prehistoric centuries, and at least 4000 years of recorded history, on the contrary, prove that the vigorous and lively people of Armenia owes its energy to the climate of their country, one of the healthiest in the temperate zone. The four seasons are regular as nowhere else. For three or four months during the winter and according to the altitude, a white sheet of snow, the purest thing in the world, covers the whole landscape, shining in brilliant luster and thrilling both human soul and eyesight and, still more, inspiring sentiments of the grandeur of Mother nature.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> This author will elsewhere write of his personal experiences of Armenian winter: once caught in a snowdrift in the Zernak pass between Kob and Khauz (the land of Khurri) and another time in the majestic pass of Aghveran, between *Srmants* learn (Bingeol Dag) and Karin.

A spell of brisk and crisp cold strengthens the heart, lungs and nerves, and renders the inhabitant energetic and optimistic. With the melting of the snow in spring, the moisture of the fertile soil grows a luxuriant vegetation, which has been the envy of all neighbors from the earliest of times. A warm summer ripens every variety of crop and fruit which from the dawn of the Neolithic Age (ca. 8000 B.C.) have supplied rich ingredients of dietetics to the natives. In autumn, fields, orchards, and gardens abound in every beneficent product, which make human life contented and healthy. Sweet odors of orchards and gardens delight the human senses, as King Sharukin of Assyria (722-705 B.C.) had noticed. Some extracts from a long letter which he addressed to his god Ashshur<sup>10</sup> bear a vivid testimony to the greatness of Urartu-Armenia in the 8th century B.C.

*"... The mount Mallau, the cypress mountain, robed in radiance, rises over the plain of the land of Subi (this is the classical Odzopi, the region of Nakhjavan, immediately south of the river Arax) ... The fortress of Ushkaya (on the southern slopes of Great Massis) was overflowing with wealth ... Its great wall, whose foundation was laid on the bedrock of the mountain, was thick eight cubits ... The city of Aniashbania, the home of his (King Rusa I) herds, situated on the border of Sangibuti (Zankezor) had 17 cities in its neighborhood ... Tarui (classical Daroink-Bayazit) and Tarmakisa, strong, walled-cities, situated in the plain of the land of Dalaia (classical Darandasht), where he had great supplies of grain, whose walls were very strong,*

<sup>10</sup> Here are combined the first translations of the Assyrian cuneiform text by Fr. Thureau-Dangin: *Une relation de la huitième campagne de Sargon, roi d'Assyrie*, 1912; the additions and collections of fragments by Bruno Meissner in *Zeitschrift fuer Assyriologie*, 1922; a translation by D. D. Kucklenbill: *Ancient records of Assyria and Babylone* (1926), Vol. II. Several other Assyriologists have since corrected isolated sentences and words.

whose outer walls were well-built, whose moats, very deep, completely surrounded them; in the midst of these are stabled his horses, reserved for his royal army, which they fatten each year . . . The city of Ulkhu, a stronghold at the foot of mount Kishbal (classical and modern Kashpel) . . . Ursa (the Assyrian king refers to King Rusa in this form), their king and counselor, following his heart's desire, showed the people where the waters gushed forth. A ditch, carrying these flowing waters, he dug out . . . brought plenty like the Euphrates.<sup>11</sup> He made numberless channels lead off from its bed . . . to irrigate the orchard . . . and made fruit and grapes as abundant as rain. Plane trees, exceedingly high, of the riches of his palace, he made like a forest . . . and like a god, he made his people raise their glad songs . . . The ground of his uncultivated areas he made like a meadow, flooding it abundantly in springtime; grass and pasturage did not fail him winter and summer; into corrals for horses and herds he turned it. A palace, a royal dwelling, he built by the side of the river for his enjoyment; with cypress beams he roofed it and thus made the odor thereof pleasant . . . The pleasant gardens which adorned the city were overflowing with fruit and wine, like the immeasurable downpour of heaven . . . The province of Sangibutu was the home of his temple, on which the kings former days . . . had lavished their wealth to extend the power of their land . . . Twenty one strong cities (most of them named in the text) like wild grapevines growing on the mountainside, stood out on the peaks of Mount Arzabia (classical Ardzap), mighty fortifications 120 tipku high . . . for their soldiers to stand on . . . for battle they were made terrible . . . Their people in plenty and abundance of

every kind were spread about. Great palaces (were adorned?) with insignia of royalty. Cypress beams, whose odor is pleasant . . . of those who entered, like cedar, it went to the heart."

In admiration and wonder King Sharukin goes on to describe what he himself saw of the wealth, abundance of every good thing, the well-being of the widespread land of Urartu-Armenia. It is noteworthy that he refers to the glad songs of the people. He adds many paragraphs in regard to the military power of Rusa I, which deserves to be cited in the words of Thureau Danguin.<sup>12</sup>

"*Ses trente villes fortes qui au bord de la mer oudoyante (Lake Van), au versant des grandes montagnes sont rangees et situees comme des bornes, Argishtiana (Ardjesh), Qallania (Kughanovit), ses puissantes fortresses, etaient solidement construites au milieu d'elles; sur les monts Artsidu (Artske, i.e., Mt. Sipan) et Makhunia (the classical Makhazunik) comme des etoiles elles brillaient: a une hauteur de quatre soixantaines (de coudees) se voyaient leurs fondements. Les guerriers, ses troupes d'elite (this means a regiment of royal guard), aptes au combat, ceux qui portent le bouclier et la lance, soutiens de son pays, etaient en garrison a l'interieur de ces fortresses. . .*"

This testimony of the Assyrian king as to the flourishing economy of Armenia is corroborated throughout more than thirty centuries by other neighbors and foreign travelers. The Hittite king Murshilish II (ca. 1350-1320 B.C.), also an eyewitness, describes dozens of thickly populated cities in the Khurrian provinces of Azzi-Khayasha (Eriza-Karin-Basiank region), the finely-

<sup>11</sup> This is really the river Aradzani, the eastern branch of the Euphrates, which in fact takes rise in the region described by Sargon.

<sup>12</sup> Fr. Thureau-Danguin: see footnote 9, lines 286-289, of the translation. Evidently, the Assyrian army was hurrying to escape before the line of retreat towards the plain of Mush was blocked by the Khaldian royal guard between Sipan and the fortress of Baghesh-Bitlis.

constructed fortress-castles, herds of cattle in thousands, stores of grain, metal objects, and so on.<sup>13</sup>

On his retreat towards the north and before reaching Armenia (401 B.C.), native guides told Xenophon<sup>14</sup> that the country was *polle* ("great, extensive") and *evdaimonas* ("fortunate, happy"), which is the same word as the Armenian "yetemakan" ("paradise"). On fording the boundary river Kentrites — Bohban, the Greek commander first came to an Armenian palace and everywhere he found abundance and other palaces as he marched to the north-west. But what, as a rule, has been singled out in modern times in Xenophon's story for emphasis is almost uniformly his description of a village chief's subterranean residence in the plain of Bagrevand, apparently as a proof of poverty and backwardness. Strabo<sup>15</sup> describes the great extent, the opulence, the power and the archers of Armenia at the time of King Tigranes the Great, just as Sallustius had done a half century earlier, and the Roman historian Ammianus Marcellinus (ca. 360 A.D.), an eyewitness, did four centuries later.

It does not come into the scope of this study to cite the national historians who, in lyrical fervor, have described the natural beauty, the well-being and the felicity of the motherland. Khazar Pharpetsi,<sup>16</sup> in particular, gives an epic picture of Armenia in the 5th century A.D. Agathange-

hos,<sup>17</sup> Faustus of Buzand,<sup>18</sup> Thomas Artzruni,<sup>19</sup> Aristakes Lastivertzi,<sup>20</sup> and others give details of the well being, prosperity and excellent order prevailing in the land.

A careful study of original documents and some hard historical thinking are necessary in order to shake off some profound misunderstandings and some prejudices as to the social and political stature of Armenia in the ancient East, in the era of King Tigranes the Great, and in earlier and subsequent centuries up to modern times.

### 5. Political Geography of Armenia. The 15 Provinces.

The outstanding features of the physical geography of the land, its orographical system corrected by some recent aerial observations, and its hydrography, will be dealt with in a subsequent article in connection with the attempted "invasion of Armenia" by Lucullus, Pompeius the Great, Domitius Corbulo and Caecilius Paetus, and finally by Emperor Trajan. Here, the geographical division of the land and their ruling hierarchy are under consideration — problems which hitherto have not been duly studied in a geopolitical viewpoint because the archaeological discoveries of recent years were not available to historians of the last century. It is not that the human factor in the geographical formation of the land has been overlooked in the past ages; on the contrary, our classical literature has handed down to us invaluable information regarding the political constitution, the administrative machinery of the land: its provincial, cantonal and district placenames, their social strata, often their economic conditions and other local peculiarities, clearly enough to enable the student to reconstruct a fairly accurate picture of the system of government, the

<sup>13</sup> A Goetze: *Die Annalen des Murshilish. In Mitteilungen d. vorderasiatisch-ägyptischen Gesellschaft.* 1933, pp. 80ff., 92 ff.

<sup>14</sup> Xenophon: *Anabasis.* III.v.17.

<sup>15</sup> Strabo: XI.14.9: The Armenian horses and abundance.

Strabo: XI.14.10: The strength and opulence of Armenia.

Strabo: XI.14.11: Theophanes of Mytilene, the Gracculi advisor of Pompeius the Great, describes the geographical extent and greatness of Armenia.

<sup>16</sup> *Patmuthiun Haiots*: Book I. 8-9.

<sup>17</sup> The edition of the Mekhitarist Fathers of Venice. 1865. pp. 386-7.

<sup>18</sup> Book IV, ch. 2. (IV century A.D.)

<sup>19</sup> *Patmuthiun Tana Andruniats.* (Ghukasian Matenadaran, 1913, p. 172).

<sup>20</sup> *Patmuthiun Haiots.* (Ghukasian Matenadaran, 1914, pp. 56 ff.).

theocratic function of the monarch and the ruling aristocracy of Armenia. The latter constituted the State Council of the land which advised the sovereign on national policy. Here, the Armenian monarch was merely the Supreme Head of the Nation *primus inter pares*, because by time-honored convention dating from prehistoric times, every certified family of Armenian hereditary nobility once — i.e., before the organization of the monarchy — had been a sovereign king in its own valley or mountain fortress, and in his own rights, while formally recognizing the Monarch as the anointed Lord of the land and his superior, he exercised full executive and judicial powers in his respective hereditary province or canton, without any reference to the royal Court of Justice.

In passing, it is appropriate to point out here one of the casual complaints of some of our classical authors — still much more in modern times — in regard to the "historic disunity" among the nation which has done a lot of damage to vital national interests. It is obvious that such complainants do not realize the nature of the institutions of a very old feudal monarchy. To judge these historical questions in the right perspective, students should study the long and bloody civil wars and mutual massacres of modern European nations in the later Middle Ages. Something more will be said about this problem in the history of King Tigranes the Great and his son King Artavazd.

Before proceeding to the enumeration of the geographical divisions of the land, one more historical point should be emphasized. The old and long list of placenames will show that the provincial — cantonal — and often city — and village — designations, as recorded by our old classical authors since the 5th century A.D., have descended directly from the Khurrian (ca. 2400-1250 B.C.), Nairi (ca. 1250-950? B.

C.), Khanigalbat (ca. 950-875 B.C.), and Khaldian-Haikian times (875 B.C. downwards).

*In the course of some forty centuries, the placenames and personal names have undergone surprisingly only slight alterations. This documentary evidence undeniably proves not only the authenticity of the entire national historical tradition, but at the same time, the Armenian people of the time of King Tigranes the Great, of the fifth century A.D., as of today, is the direct and unmixed heir of the Khurrian and Khaldian-Haikian original and noble civilization, although diminished, weakened, humbled and scattered in the course of the cursed present century.*

#### 6. A description of the 15 provinces, and a table of 189 cantons

Historical events of a country cannot be well appreciated without a correct knowledge of its geographical features. Human beings and animals walk on earth; conditions of a journey or the outcome of a war are more or less determined by the topographical *terrain* of the land. Mountains, rivers, gorges, valleys, flat plains, etc., play a considerable part in deciding the issue of a war. The repulse of the aggressive Roman attempts against Pontos and Armenia under King Tigranes and centuries later must partly be explained by the advantageous strategic position which the Gohanam-Sepuh ranges offered the Armenian cavalry.

There are four principal ancient sources from which a general geographical sketch of Armenian lands may be pieced together. In order of seniority, these sources are:

(1) The inscriptions of Hittite kings (ca. 1600-1200 B.C.).

(2) The extensive placenames mentioned by King Zimrilim of Mari (ca. 1700 B.C.), and especially of the Assyrian kings from 1380 downwards (ca. 1380-650 B.C.).



(3) The contribution of Khaldian-Armenian kings themselves comprised in their lapidary inscriptions still standing today, many of them almost completely intact and legible (ca. 875-600 B.C.).

(4) The vast Armenian literature (classical and modern) in alphabetical script, which has standardized the placenames ever since, and which complement and enlighten the geographical information supplied by the first three sources and *vice versa*.

Greco-Roman, Byzantine, Arab, and other literatures, recording historical events and placenames day-to-day down to modern times confirm the Armenian tradition in many respects; Owing, however, to linguistic, social and political difficulties, with which Greeks and Romans were beset in their approach to Eastern peoples, their literary sources must be utilized with great caution and after thorough-going criticism, if it is deserved, to derive any definite information on the East. Illustrations of this assertion will be presented in the next part, in connection with the military affairs to be discussed.

The geographical names and divisions of Armenia under the Arshakuni Dynasty and later, are fully rendered by a geographical Handbook entitled "View of the World", compiled by Anania Shirakaci, the Armenian astronomer, at the end of the sixth or the beginning of the seventh century A.D. who enumerated the place-names and fixed the historical divisions of the land of the Armenians as it had existed since Khaldian-Haikian times <sup>(21)</sup>.

An accompanying map, as drawn by

Father Alishan (1855) and H. Hubschmann (1904) represents in general outline, the location and geographical contiguity of Armenia Major, with its fifteen provinces, and 189 cantons, which are as follows:

I. (Bardsr Haik) "High Armenia." It covers all Western Cantons extending between the Euphrates at Kamakh and the fortress-city of Karin-Erzerum. As fully discussed in a chapter on Khurrian reli-

century later; Cf. J. Marquardt: *Eranshahr nach der Geographie des Moses von Khorene*, op. cit pp. 1-4. From the viewpoint of linguistics and internal evidence, it seems to me more likely that Anania Shirakaci is the author of the Handbook. Another fuller handbook by Vardan: *Geography* (13th century), the Armenian text published first in Constantinople in 1728. See J. de Saint-Martin: *Memoires historiques et geographiques sur l'Arménie* (1819), Vol. II where the Armenian text is reprinted with a translation in French. In the decade 1660 - 70, Iakob Karneci, a native of Erzerum, wrote a *Teghbagir Verin Haiots* (— Topography of Upper Armenia), a masterly description of the lands between Trabizond and the Eastern Euphrates, their politics and great economic prosperity; a long review of it by Fr. Macler: *Journal Asiatique*, numbers of 1917-18. The topography of Armenia was thoroughly studied throughout the last century by,

a. Father Ghevond Inijjian: *New Armenia* (1806) Venice, pp. 424.

b. id id id. *Storagrutian bin Haiastaniats Ashkharbin*. (Topography of the land of Ancient Armenia) (1882) pp. 554.

c. id id id: *Hnakhsutian Ashkharbagrakan Haiastaniats Ashkharbi* ("Geographical archaeology of the land of Armenia"), three volumes pp. 487 427 393 (1835 - 6).

All these five volumes by Father Inijjian were translated into Italian by G. Capelletti, entitled *L' Armenia* (1841). For a general bibliography of historical, literary and topographical studies up to 1901, see H. F. B. Lynch: *Armenia: Travels and Studies* (1901) two volumes, Vol. II 470-96. Before and since a very large number of local or general topographical studies by native Armenians, each for his canton, city or province, have been published in book form or in periodical literature. Some of these will be cited as the occasion arises. A fuller list of these studies in Armenian up to 1908, see, Gregor Khalatians: *Eminian aghkakragan dzoghovadzoo*. (*Eminian Adzagragakan dzoghovadzoo*) "Eminian Ethnographical Corpus" Vol. VII (1908) pp. 37-58. Many of later works of this character have been mentioned in following pages. See below the words of Father Alishan and H. Hubschmann.

<sup>21</sup> K. Patkanian: *Armyanski geographiya VII veka* (1879). A translation of the text into Russian. Patkanian was the first to attribute this hand book to Shirakaci.

P. A. Soukry: *Geographie de Moise de Corene*, the Armenian text and a translation in French (1881). It is still a moot point whether this Handbook was composed by M. Khorenaci in the fifth century or by Anania Shirakaci about a

gion, some of the oldest shrines of Armenia with her complete "colony" of gods and goddesses; the city of Erez-Erzenka, Derdjan Derxene, with Anahit-Mihr and Astghik temples spread along the course of the Euphrates and its tributaries. It comprised also the eastern valleys of the Kashka mountains north of Erzerum reaching to the Black Sea, across the river Djorokh. The inscriptions of King Murshilish II will show this in topographical detail. It contained nine Cantons.

II. (Dzopk) — Sophene (<sup>22</sup>), extending south of the province Bardsr Haik all along the northern slopes, the crests and gorges of mountain Taurus. It was divided into two parts: *Dzop'k Medz* ("the great Dz) and *Dzop'k Shahea*, recorded also as *Dz. Shahumvoy* (Sophene? of the classics). It comprised the famous fortresses lying between the cities of Kharberd and Diarbekr, including the mountainous Canton of Dersim. Roughly, it corresponded to the Kingdoms of Ishuwa (Dzop'k) and Ishmirike (Tschemshkadzak) of Hittite records, the southern cantons of which formed the core of the empire of Mitanni — Khani-galbat. It contained ten cantons and their fortress-cities such as Ingilene, Asthianene, Balabithene, Khordsene, Anzitene and others (<sup>23</sup>).

III. (Aghdsenik) — Arzanene, extending

<sup>22</sup> F. H. Weissbach (*Pauly's Realencyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, 2, Reihe, III A. I. part 5, (1927) Cols. 1015-19) has presented a full account of the province from Greco-Roman classics; he has quoted Pliny, Tacitus, Justinus, Diodorus, Strabo, Plutarchos, Appianus, Ptolemy and others, as well as the Khaldian inscriptions of king Menua, who mentions the fortress Tsupani, exactly corresponding to Dzop'k. Ptolemy mentions Tomisa as the principal city of the province, equivalent to Damdamusa mentioned by Assyrian kings.

<sup>23</sup> *Pauly's Realencyclopädie* mentioned in previous footnote contains full information on each of these cantons, under their respective headings. As already stated, the information is derived chiefly from Greco-Roman classics, although often Armenian, Arabic and other sources also are thrown in.

due east of Dzop'k, the mountainous land comprised between the Western shores of Lake Van and the Tigris. Its main centers were the famous fortress-city of Baghesh-Biltis, Ardzn, Np'ret-Farkin and historic Tigranakert. The block of mountains of Sasun and neighbouring valleys also form part of the province. It corresponds to the Kingdom of Alshe (Aghdsenik), often mentioned by Hittite and early Assyrian kings. It was the original Homeland of the Khaldian-Dynasty as well as the birth-place of Armenian national epics. It contained ten cantons, which, as will be seen later, are inextricably involved with those of Dzop'k. The southern-eastern portions of the province are the only region of Armenia where winter rains are regular; snow falls rarely and when it does, is melted in a few days. Fruits and plants of hot climates thrive in the region and are famous for their flavour and quality.

IV. (Turuberan), Taraunitis of Tacitus, the central home of Khurrian people and Monarchy and the capital state of the Khurrian *Eidgenossenschaft*, (a federation of states, like Switzerland, based on oath) just as in the first few centuries of our era the intellectual cradle of national literature and historiography. Within its frontiers lie even today some of the oldest temples and shrines of the race, the ruins of the impregnable fortress — castles of the Mamikonian clan, famous for their unique military position as Marshalls of the Armenian Cavalry.

It contains sixteen cantons. The river Aradzani (Eastern Euphrates) although starting in the province of Airarat (see XV) further north, drains literally hundreds of fairly large rivers rising in the province.

V. (Mokk), the province of unbroken chains of high mountains, deep green valleys and roaring streams, extending south of high Ardos mountains south of Lake Van. Through the main valley flow the

headwaters of Eastern Tigris from East to West. For wild mountain scenery, sumptuous pasturages, variety of game and breed of animals the province has been famous from the days of Assyria. It comprises nine cantons.

VI. (Kordjaik), Gordiene of the classics, south and east of Mokk, in the northern cantons of which rise the headwaters of Great Zab. Here the flat-bottomed blocks of the Taurus jut out into the Zagros system, making each a complex of the landscape, which has not yet been properly surveyed. The southern boundary crosses the Bohban Su into the Kurdish districts of Bohtan. It contained eleven cantons, many of which can be localized only hypothetically, such as those of Upper Kordik, Middle Kordik and Lower Kordik <sup>(24)</sup>.

VII. (Parskahaik) "Persarmenia." Corresponding to the province of Atrpatakan in the ancient historical sense, west of the Lake Urmiya and bounded in the north by river Arax. It comprised nine cantons, including those of the ancient fortresses of Saghamut (Salmas), Her (Khoy) and Djahuk (today Djara), perched on an inaccessible crag in a narrow valley.

VIII. (Vaspurakan) the province of Van which together with those of Turuberan and Aghdsenik constituted the birthplace and central domains of Khurrian and Khaldian-Haikian Dynasties. It covered most of the Lake and the bountiful valleys up to the Arax. It is the largest province of Armenia Minor and contained 36 cantons.

IX. (Siyunik), extends north of Vaspurakan, across the Arax and east of the pro-

vince of Airarat, a province of historic cities and fortresses both in Khaldian times and in Middle Ages. Geographically as well as historically it can hardly be separated from:

X. (Artsakh) lying north of the last-mentioned. The waters of Lake Sevan wash the fringes of the western heights of the two provinces where extensive patches of thick forests and inaccessible valleys harboured a breed of wild horses until some 25 years ago. Up to modern times the local Armenian aristocracy maintained its position in hereditary castles and fortresses. The two provinces together comprise twenty-four cantons; none of them seems to have been known to Greco-Roman classics. They correspond today roughly to Karabagh, "black orchards," a descriptive name derived from thick forests and luxurious orchards of the region.

XI. (Paitakaran) covers the broad grasslands around the confluence of rivers Arax and Kur, roughly the plain of Mughan, stretching along the south-western shores of the Caspian Sea. The Armenian *Geographie* (VII century) names the northern parts across the river Kur as the land of the nation Shirwan, the ancient Khanates of Shirwan, Shamakh and Sheki. It comprised twelve cantons most of which cannot be located at all.

XII. (Uti), the province of flat plains extending between Artsakh, the rivers Arax and Kur and across the latter into the lowest spurs of the Caucasus. Pliny (*naturalis historiae* VI 13, 13) and Ptolemy (V.12.4) mention it under the form *Otene*, which resembles the native name, but these authors had very vague ideas of its location. (See H. Hubschmann: *Die altarmenischen Ortsnamen* p. 268 ff.)

XIII. (Gugark), the province Gogarene of Strabo (p. 528) bordering along the river Kur on the south and the borderland between Armenia and Georgia. It compris-

<sup>24</sup> Martin Hartmann: *Bohtan*. . . *Mitteilungen Der Vor-Asiatische Gesellschaft*, part I (1896), part II (1897); H. Hubschmann: *Die altarmenischen Ortsnamen*, p. 286. Cf. also Moxuene, Gordiene and Kardukhoi in the *Pauly's Realencyclopädie*. . .

ed nine cantons, and together with those of the next, the province of Taik, is well described by King Murshilish II. The Bdeashkh (markgrave) of Gugark was one of the four High military dignitaries of Armenian Monarchy guarding the frontiers towards the north. The river Kur rises in the south-eastern valleys of the province and traverses the fertile plains of both countries.

XIV. (Taik), the province joins Bardsr-Haik from the north and comprises some of the famous fortresses of the Kashkaland, which bravely defended themselves against the assaults of Murshilish II. It is the Diau-land of King Menua of Khaldia and Taochi of Xenophon. The place-name does not seem to have hitherto come to light in the Hittite inscriptions. It contained eight cantons which are fully discussed in the chapter on the Khurrian history.

XV. (Airarat), the royal domain and the seat of Arshakuni Dynasty from 520 B.C. onwards (?). Since the beginning of our era in particular, the province has been the heartland of the country, with its

Capital cities of Artashat and Dwin and the spiritual metropolis of Echmiadzin-Vagarshapat. It is surrounded by Vaspurakan and Parskahaik from the south, by Siyunik in the East, by Artsakh and Gugark in the north and by Taik in the west. It contains twenty cantons and forms the core of Armenian Republic today. Source material is still lacking for determining the circumstances and the date of the transfer of the empire's Capital from Tushpa-Van to Artashat-Airarat, north of river Arax; it must have occurred at the time of Darius I of Persia (521-486 B.C.), in any case before the downfall of the Achaemenid Dynasty in 331 B.C. This obscure problem will be dealt with in the chapter *Armenia — Persia*.

Here follows a table of the fifteen provinces, their 189 cantons, their prototypes or localities in the Khurrian, Hittite, Assyrian, Khaldian and later Greco-Roman and Arab sources.

Armenia Minor, Cappadocia and Cilicia will be taken into account in tracing the scenes of conflict between the years 74-64 B.C.

### The Fifteen Provinces (lands) and 189 Cantons of Armenia Magna <sup>(25)</sup>

<i>Names of ancient Cantons (classical)</i>	<i>Names of their Modern districts or cities</i>	<i>Original names in cuneiform</i>	<i>Greco-Roman or other references</i>
<b>PROVINCE OF BARDSR HAIK</b>			
Daranaghik	Kamakh, T'ordan	Shamukha	Daranalis
Ariudz	Kerjanis		
Mntsur	Mntsur, Guruchai		
Egeghiatz	Erez-Ernka	Azzi	Acilicene
Mananaghi	Shushar		
Derdjan	Derdjan	Terushsha (?)	Derxene
Sper	Ispir	Zaparashna	Saspeires
Shatgomk	Ashkala	Ishtitina	

<sup>25</sup> H. Hubschmann: *Die altarmenischen Ortsnamen* (1904) pp. 284 ff, enumerates and fully describes these provinces and cantons.

<i>Names of ancient Cantons (classical)</i>	<i>Names of their Modern districts or cities</i>	<i>Original names in cuneiform</i>	<i>Greco-Roman or other references</i>
Karin	Erzerum	Karna (?)	Karenitis
PROVINCE OF DZOPK			
Khordsean <sup>(26)</sup>	Keghi-Arindj	Khashshuva (?)	Khorzene
Hashteank	Djabaghtschur-Gindj		Astaunene
Paghnatun	Baghin	Pakhkhuva	Balines
Balahovit	Palu, Saghman		Balabitene
Dzop'k Great or	Kharberd	Tzupani-Shebi	
Dzop'k Shahea	Tchmeshkadzak	Ishmirike	
Handsit	Husnik	Enzi-Enzite	Digisencs
Degik	Egil (?) - Haini (?)		
Gorek-Gaurek	Gorek		Garines
Angegh tun	Egil, Agl.	Ankhite	Ingilene
Khozan	Khozan	Khuzana (ni)	Khozane
PROVINCE OF AGHDSENIK			
Np'rkert or Np'ret	Farkin	Nikhkhaya (?)	
Artsn	Kharzan		Arzon
K'egh	Eastern Khizan (?)		
Ketik			
Tatik	Tatik (Guzel Dere)		
Aznuats Dsor			
Serkhet-Kherhetk	Sgherd-Zrkan		
Kzegh	Khizan	Gilzan	
Salnadsor	Baghaghesh-Bitlis	Salua	
Sanasneaik	Sasun	Zazabukha (?)	
Noshirakan	East of Nisibin (?)		
Nihorakan	Dahe Khargan		
Mahkertun	(?)	Gundakrikka	
Dasn	Kingawar-Dasen region	Tesammia	
Dzaudek	Hisnkeif	Shuta	Zabdicene

<sup>26</sup> J. Markwart, (*Sudarmenien und die Tigrisquellen*, 1930, p. 31 and footnotes) suggests that the conception of Dzop'k-Sophene as an extensive land, arose first after the foundation of the Kingdom of Zariadris was the father of Artashes, who does notnhten Landes entstand aber erst nach der Grundung des Reiches der Zariadris). The Hittite, Assyrian and Khaldian documents seem to fully repudiate the view transmitted by Strabo. The inscribed steles of King Artashes also have shown that Zariatra-Zariadris was the father of Artashes, who does not say that his father was the ruler of Dzopk-Sophene (See previous number of The Armenian Review, p. 62). As will be observed in the text of Anania Shirakaci, as well as in the commentaries of Father Alishan, H. Hubschman and many others, this second province of Armenian Major is recorded as "Tchorord Haik" (Fourth Armenia), a perfidious manipulation of the Byzantine emperor Justinianus in 536 A.D. and of his successors. On strictly epigraphic and historical grounds, this falsification of the patronymic of a great province immortalized by the Hittite, Khurrian and Khaldian kings as Ishuwa-Dzupani-Dzopk, has been eliminated in this study from the Armenian geographical nomenclature.



<i>Names of ancient Cantons (classical)</i>	<i>Names of their Modern districts or cities</i>	<i>Original names in cuneiform</i>	<i>Greco-Roman or other references</i>
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Arznarziv	Ruins of Artsn	Irsia	
Reimena	(?)		

## PROVINCE OF TURUBERAN

Khuyt	Khut		Khotene
Aspakunik			
Taraun	Mush, Tchukhur	Teriani (?)	Taraunitis
Ashmunik			
Mardaghi			
Dasnawork <sup>(28)</sup>			
Tuaradzatap	Garayaz Steppe	Teburzi -	
Dalar	Thorlu	Dalaia	
Hark	Mountain Khamur	Khurri	Al-Hark
Varazhnunik	Liz		
Bznunik	Khlat-Ardzke	Uasi-Artsidu	
Erevark			
Aghiovit	Patnots	Aiadi-Alia	Apahbunis
Apahunik	Abagha	Apuuni-Abaeni	Haitou
Gori	Bulanik -		Kharka
Khorkhorunik	Manazkert	Khurri (see "Hark")	Kai Tou Kore

## PROVINCE OF MOKK

Ishayr	Sparkert-Gargar	Sapparia	
Ishayr the other			
Ishuts gavar			
Arvenits Dzor	Erun		
Mitscha	Berwari (?)		
Mokk'arantsnak	Moks		Moxuene
Ark'ayaits gavar	Mountain valleys between Moks and Shatakh		
Argastovit			Zirmas
Tschermadzor	Shatakh		

## PROVINCE OF KORDJAIK

Gortuk	Tmorik	Tumme	Kardouchoi
Gortuk-Verin	Bohtan	Babkhi	Qardu
Gortuk-Mftschin			
Gordrik Nerkin			
Aituank	Bat'uan (?)		

<sup>27</sup> It seems to me that there is a confusion here, probably an error of a copyist in regard to the Cantons Noshirakhan to Makhertun. It requires a full typographical discussion for clearing up the confusion, a task which cannot be undertaken here.

<sup>28</sup> The reading of this placename in mss. is doubtful.

<i>Names of ancient Cantons (classical)</i>	<i>Names of their Modern districts or cities</i>	<i>Original names in cuneiform</i>	<i>Greco-Roman or other references</i>
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Aigark			
Motoghank	Motki	Kutmukhi	
Orsirank			
Karatunik			
Djahuk	Djara (?)		
Pok'r Aghbak	Hakkari	Ukku	Albak

## PROVINCE OF PARSKAHAİK

Aili-Guridjan	Kuluzan	Gurusupa	
Mari			
T'rap'i			
Atsuers		Izirtu	
Erna			
Tambers	T'ambat		
Zarehavan			
Zaravand	Salmast	Zaranda	
Her ( <sup>20</sup> )	Khoy		

## PROVINCE OF VASPURAKAN

Rsh tunik	Ostan-Gavash	Uashdrikka	
Tosp	Vantosp	Turushpa-Biaina	
Budonik	Fortress Amiuk		
Ardjishakovit	Ardjesh		
Aghatsovit			
Barilovit			
Kughanovit		Kalania	
Arperani	Berkri	Arbu	
Darni	Taparez		
Buzhunik	P'agants		
Arnoyotn	Arnos Chain	Eriduni	
Andsavatsik	Norduz		
Trpatunik	Khoshab		Tiribazos
Erit'unik	Artamed (P)		
Mardastan			Matiene-Mardi
Artaz	Maku	Kakme	

<sup>20</sup> Hubschmann unites Zaravand and Her under the name Zaravand, and makes Her — Khoy as a mere city. *Salmast*, often quoted in Armenian classics as Saghamas, seems to correspond to *Shalakhamanu*, mentioned by the Assyrian king Shulmanu-Ashared III (859-26 B.C.) in his 31st campaign, together with Bushtu and *Kinikhamanu* (See, Armenian Lanan-Gtunik).

<i>Names of ancient Cantons (classical)</i>	<i>Names of their Modern districts or cities</i>	<i>Original names in cuneiform</i>	<i>Greco-Roman or other references</i>
Ake	Hajanan (?)	Aukane	
Aghbak medz	Bashgala		
Andzahidzor	Kotur		
Tornavan			
Djuashrot			
Krdjunik			
Medzunik			
Palunik			
Gukan			
Aghandrot			
Batsparunik	Peshbarma		
Artashezian			
Artavanian			
Bak'an			
Gabit'ian			
Gazrikan	Karjikan		
Tankriain			
Varazhnunik			
Gogh't'n	Jugha, Akulis	Guluta	
Nakhdjavan	Nakhitschevan		
Marand	Marand		

## PROVINCE OF SIYUNIK

Erendjak	Erendjak, Alendja		
Djahuk	North Nakhitschevan		
Vayots Dzor	Vedi, Daralaghez		
Geghak'uni	Vavor, Kokchai		
Sotk	Sodk, Dsar		
Aghahetschk	Zangezor		
Dzghak	Barkushat, Meghri		
Haband	Upper Zangezor	Ubianda	
Baghk	Dat'ev		
Dzork	Chap'an		
Arevik	Meghri		
Kusakan	Ortupad, Genuas		

## PROVINCE OF ARTSAKH

Haband, the other	Shushi Chlaberd	Ubianda	
Vaikunik			
Berdzor	Shamsatil-Ayrum		
Medskuank	Khachenk		

<i>Names of ancient Cantons (classical)</i>	<i>Names of their Modern districts or cities</i>	<i>Original names in cuneiform</i>	<i>Greco-Roman or other references</i>
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Medsirank	Gulistan
Hardjlank	Varanda (?)
Mukhank	Mughan (?)
Piank	Varanda (?)
Paidskank	
Sisakan Ostan	Zeiva, Khachen
Kusti P'arnes	Shamkhor (?)
Koght'	Zagam

## PROVINCE OF PAITAKARAN

Hrakot-Berozh	(?)
Verdanakert	Vardanlu
Eutnp 'orakean-Ba- gink	region of Baku?
Roti-Bagha	Ark'evan)
Baganrot	Talish
Arospizhan	Sep'etash)
Hani	(?)
Atshi)	Region of Baku
Bagavan)	
Shandar-Perozh	(?)
Vormzt-Perozh	(?)
Alevan-Aghvan	(?)

## PROVINCE OF UTI

Aranrot	(?)
Tri	Keberbin (?)
Rotpatsean	(?)
Aghue	(?)
Tuchkatak	(?)
Gardman	Gardman K'rtmanik
Shakashen	Gantsak-Genja
Uti Arantsnak	Djvanshir, Bardav

## PROVINCE OF GUGARK

Dzorop'or	Dzoroyget
Dsob'p'or	Borchalu
Koghbop'or	Borchalu, Khazakh
Tashirk	Tori, Bampak
T'reghk	Trialeti
Kangark	Apotz, Bampak
Artahan	Ardahan

<i>Names of ancient Cantons (classical)</i>	<i>Names of their Modern districts or cities</i>	<i>Original names in cuneiform</i>	<i>Greco-Roman or other references</i>
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Tschavakhk	Tschavakhete		
Kghartschk	Klardjeti, Ardanuch	Kalashma or Kalamashma	

## PROVINCE OF TAIK

Kogh	Kole		
Berdatsp'or	P'enek-Tauskiar		
Partizatsp'or	Olti, Bardes		
Kjakk	Akhltskha		
Bukha	Shavshet'		
Okaghe	T'ort'un	Turmitta	
Azordap'or <sup>(30)</sup>	Nariman		
Asiatsp'or	Berdagrak, Parkhar	Kingdom of Khayasha	

## PROVINCE OF AIRARAT

Baseank	Basen-Hasangala)		Phasianene
Gabegheank	Upper Basen)		
Abegheank)	Lower Basen)		
Havnunik)			
Arsharunik	Chalderan, Kaghzwán)		
Bagrevand	Alashkert)	Sapagurvanta	Bagravandene
Dsaghkotr	Diadin)		
Vanand	Kars)		Artagira (?)
Shirak	Kumairi-Leninakan (Shoragel)	Zikhariya	
Aragadsotr	Sardarapat		
Djakatk	Koghb		
Masiatsotr	Bayazid-Surmari		
Kogovit	Bayazid-Taroink	Tarui	
Ashotsk	Aparan		
Nig	Erevan (?)		
Kotaik	Kirkpulak		
Maghagh or Mazaz (?)	Kokchai (?)		
Varazhnunik	Dsaghkadzor		
Ostan Dounay	Karbi-Garni	Etiuni	
Dashtn Sharur	Sharur, Khok	Shururiya	

<sup>30</sup> As will be noticed, Hubschmann puts Azordap'or and Asiatsp'or together as Azord and Gap'or; from this number onwards, he differs from Alishan on the later comparisons of mss. variants, and is one number ahead of the traditional numbering of the Cantons.



In looking for a scheme to explain the more important placenames mentioned by the Hittite, Assyrian, Khaldian and other inscriptions in terms of the geographical designations of Armenian and other classics and of modern times, it seemed convenient to present first a synthesis of the geography of Anania Shirakaci, of Vardan and others mentioned before. Basing himself mainly on the terminology of Shirakaci's prototype, Alishan <sup>(31)</sup> in 1855 arranged the fifteen provinces and the 189 Cantons of ancient Armenia Major in a tabulated form. Alishan discussed more than 2000 historic place-names as comprised in the fifteen provinces and their 189 Cantons. I have reproduced above Alish-

an's table with some minor corrections of his identifications which have been ascertained by further research since 1855. In his equally masterly analysis of Armenian topography, Hubschmann has also adopted Shirakaci as his starting point, but has utilized every other source of available information, whether Armenian, Arab or Greco-Roman <sup>(32)</sup>. None of these authors, however, seem to have been aware of an original source of information regarding the number of Armenian Cantons recorded in the third century A.D. in the Syriac language, and by Assyrians, but rendered into Armenian in the fifth, after the discovery of the alphabet. Although the number of provinces is not mentioned in it, that of the Cantons is given as six hundred and twenty <sup>(33)</sup>.

This much longer number of cantons mentioned by St. Lousavorich and recorded by Abbot Zenob may be explained by the fact that St. Grigor's estimate was not one of official administrative divisions but was based on the necessities of religious teaching and preaching. St. Grigor must have required teachers for every communal center, for every *gavarak*, a large county, with its surrounding villages, farms and orchards and pasturages. In fact, Zenob cites hamlets like Meghti with 1710 families, Barekh with 1500 and many oth-

<sup>31</sup> Father Ghevond Alishan: *Topography of Armenia Magna* (1855), 105 quarto pages, printed by the Armenian Mekhitharist Congregation in Venice and translated into French in the *Journal Asiatique* (1868) as *Topographie de la Grande Arménie*. In a really fruitful literary life of more than sixty years (1820-1901) and confining himself in his cell on the small island San Lazzaro (Venice), Father Alishan never visited Armenia. But he was endowed with a unique historic sense and intellectual vision. With the encouragement and patronage of all Armenian ecclesiastical and civil authorities in the country, Alishan sent out geographical *questionnaires* to every Armenian city, convent and village with the request to reply in minute detail in regard to the name, position, local traditions, the surroundings, monuments and every particular, of topographical, historical and scientific (botany, ornithology, and so on) interest. In addition to these replies, every Armenian Mss. or printed book, every other classical source and modern European traveller dealing with western Asia was known to him. He worked on these materials some thirty years (roughly 1850-80). His monumental topographical monographs were serially published in Venice as,

(a) *Shirak* (the province of Kars), 1881 pp. 192.

(b) *Sisuan* (Kilikia of the Armenians and King Levan the Great) 1885, pp. 582.

(c) *Airarat* (Bnashkharh Hayastaniats) 1890, pp. 590.

(d) *Sisakam* (Topography of the land of Siyunik) 1893 pp. 563.

These works and many other mythological, religio-historical and patriotic studies of his are models of accurate scientific research and precision. His monographs on the topography of the other provinces remain hitherto unpublished. It is time that they were brought to light.

<sup>32</sup>H. Hubschmann: *Die altarmenischen Ortsnamen*, mit Beiträgen zur historischen Topographie Armeniens und einer Karte. *Indogermanische Forschungen*, herausg. von K. Brugmann und W. Streitberg. XVI (1904) pp. 193-490. The numbering of Cantons in heavy black type in Hubschmann's work is that of Shirakaci.

<sup>33</sup> Zenob Glak: *Patmutibn Taranoy* (The history of the province of Taran), second letter, Armenian ed. (1832), p. 12. This is a letter which St. Grigor, the Apostle of Armenia, wrote to Bishop Leontius of Caesaria in Cappadocia, asking him to send Christian teachers for the education of his people: "Because you know", wrote St. Grigor, "that we need bishops and priests for the teaching of everyone of our Cantons. Though some have arrived from various countries, but how few are they for the six hundred and twenty Cantons of Armenia? . . ."

ers, each containing 10,000 souls on the average. These flourishing districts were lively even forty years ago, but today a howling desert by the Grace of the Mighty, who every year discuss "human rights" ceremonially.

This is a bare presentation of the *Ritterland*<sup>34</sup> of Armenia Minor, the Homeland of courageous *Feldherren*, like the kings Argisteses, Sarduris, Rusases, Artasheses, Tigraneses, and *sparapets* from the clans of Ardzrunik, Mamikoniank (Vasak, Vache, Artavazd, Mushegh, Vardan, etc.), and the Bagratunik, Siyunik, Palunik<sup>35</sup>,

<sup>34</sup> Werner Schur: *Pauly's Realencyclopaedie*: Vol. XVII, part 2 (1949), cols. 2003 ff. *Ritterland* means the band of the noble knights.

<sup>35</sup> W. Ensslin: *Pauly's Realencyclopaedie*: Vol. XVIII, part 2 (1942), col. 2053. Herr Ensslin, who has written many articles on Armenia, re-

fers to prince Pharak Paluni as *Armenischer Feldherr*, which means a victorious commander in chief in the field.

and seventy others, of their wealth and well being as well, as seen by neighbors. During many peaceful centuries prior to the accession of King Tigranes, the power and wealth of the country must have grown to still higher degree. A country so rich and prosperous would not have escaped the attentions of the avaricious merchant Lucullus and the inhuman usurer Pompeius, as Sallustius well says: "The Romans have weapons against all men, the sharpest where victory yields the greatest spoils."

As will be seen in the next article, those sharpest weapons were broken by the still sharper weapons first of the Armenian and then of the Parthian soldiers.

fers to prince Pharak Paluni as *Armenischer Feldherr*, which means a victorious commander in chief in the field.

(To be continued)



# SENTENCED TO SIBERIA

ARMEN SANINIAN

The red flames of the long furnace were scorching my body. The hot flicking tongues first licked my face, my head, my shoulders and my waist, and then, like a torch flame, probed deeper and deeper inside, roasting my body both from without and within. I twisted and rolled from the excruciating pain, feverishly trying with my hands to protect the most sensitive spots. Yet, nothing would help. At the same time I did not die. I had to get out of the furnace, but when I groped with my fingers, those standing outside seared my fingers with red hot irons and again I was rolling in the flames.

"I've had enough! Take me out of here. Have pity. I am a human being, a living human being. Take me out of here," I screamed.

But the answer to my cries was only the echo of a diabolical chuckle which made me feel there never would be an end to my insufferable torture. After a while all was dark again.

When I opened my eyes I found myself stretched at the base of the wall. It was bright as daylight in the inquisition building. My whole body was quivering with pain, as if I had been seared by hot irons on a thousand parts, blood still flowing from my wounds. My whole shirt clung to my body, as if pasted with glue, and the slightest move to disengage it from the body drove me mad with pain.

At first it seemed to me the room was deserted, but presently I saw the Chekist seated behind his desk, his chin in his hand, leaning on the table. The smoke of

the cigarette dangling from the corner of his mouth rose slowly upwards in long curls and then dissipated itself in the air. From the window could be seen a gentle snowfall. It seemed it was dusk. The Chekist's face which I scarcely could notice was unfamiliar to me, however, his complete calm and the indifferent steadfastness of his gaze on a fixed spot made me feel that I would not be tortured that day any more.

Man will seek pity even in his torturer and at the moment I was madly thirsty. "Water, give me some water," I pleaded.

The Chekist shifted his eyes on me without moving. "Ah, you have come to. Get up and come here."

"I am dying from thirst. Give me a drop of water."

"We have no water here. You will get it at your cell. Now get up and come here."

"There is no water in the cell."

"I will see to it that they give you some. Now get up and come here."

Painfully I managed to rise to my feet yet I could not keep steady. I was about to slump on the floor. "I beg of you, send me to my cell."

"By all means." He rose to his feet. "But first you must sign this paper."

"I signed it yesterday."

"That one did not arrive in time. Come closer."

By now I had lost the earth with its five or six continents which God had created for man to be free and to feel like a man. To me, that world had ceased to exist. I was filled with a boundless revul-

sion as I watched my tormentor. I regretted that I had been born a man; I shrank from that name. I was no longer the master of my share of life, the enjoyments which it offered, even its God-given water and air. I felt like a beetle caught and clamped in a tin can.

"Where shall I sign it?"

"Right here," he pushed the document toward me and held out the pen.

As I tried to held the pen for the first time I saw that my fingers were swollen, black and blue. They felt like thick beams trying to seize a thin needle.

"I cannot sign now. Give me a couple of days and I will sign it."

"Nothing doing. I have orders not to send you to your cell until you sign the document. After that. . ." he looked at me knowingly.

"It's all the same to me. The sooner the better."

"Don't say that. You still are too young."

"But my fingers refuse to hold it."

"Try it somehow."

"All right, I will try it somehow." With a superhuman effort I forced my fingers to hold the pen. My signature was an outlandish thing, zigzagging, and crawling up and down.

"It's good enough," the Chekist approved as he hurriedly folded the document and filed it in his desk. "I will now send you to your cell," he tapped the bell.

We both were silent until the guard arrived. The Chekist yawned lazily and kept looking at his wrist watch.

"Let's go," the soldier yanked me by the arm.

"Please, don't forget the water," I turned to the Chekist who was putting on his coat.

"Ah yes, tell them to give this man some water," he said to the soldier.

Walking was very difficult for me. Each movement caused me an intense physical pain. My guard walked by my side but he

did not hurry me. The corridors were deserted, complete silence everywhere. It was too early yet.

"Did they beat you up?" the soldier hissed through his teeth, without looking at me.

"Yes," somehow I managed to turn my face.

"Don't look at me," he warned me, then commanded in a loud voice, "Faster, walk a little faster."

The Chekist who had obtained my signature passed by us whistling a popular tune, "How lovely are the girls in this world!"

"Let me rest a bit," I begged my guard when the Chekist was gone.

The guard stopped. "Take it easy a minute, but be sure you tell no one in the cell about this."

"You can count on me."

"The other day one of the guards slipped some ointment to a man who like you had been beaten up. The inmates of the cell reported the thing and now that guard is in jail."

"From our cell?"

"How should I know? There are hundreds of cells. Which one is yours?"

"Number 176."

"No, this was another cell."

"There must have been some informers in that cell."

"I don't know. Let's keep going. You can take it easy in the corridors."

"I thought all the guards are nasty and hate us prisoners."

"It is their duty to be nasty otherwise they will be in your shoes. But the bad are more than the good much the same as in ordinary life."

When we reached the iron fence behind which lay the world of the slaves I said to the soldier, "I am so grateful to you."

"Forget it," he said, "I did nothing special. I too am a human being."

The gate opened and my guard delivered me to my cell. The minute the gate closed upon me the prisoners of the upper story surrounded me. "Oh, Oh, Oh. . .

"What's the matter?" I tried to smile, but the effort was too much for me.

"Your face is unrecognizable."

"How are my eyes? My vision is terrible."

They made me stand under the light. "They look bad. They are black and blue. Can you see?"

"Comrade, help me remove my shirt, it is stuck to my flesh."

It was like taking a second beating for me to tear off this shirt from my back, pasted on with the clotted and dried blood, and in places, due to the heavy beating, completely immersed and woven into my flesh. The operation, which the prisoners performed with extraordinary patience, took more than one hour.

When finally I was stripped to waist the prisoners started to count the marks of the blows.

"One hundred and fifty at the least," one of them guessed.

"Perhaps more," another ventured, "but comrades, I have never seen such an unconscionable beating."

"There is no such thing as a conscionable beating."

"But take a look. With each blow the whip sank one centimeter deep into the kid's flesh. They must have wanted to kill him. Compared to these, the wounds of Sengin are but a plaything." Sengin had been tortured the day before.

"How does he feel now?" I asked.

"He still is in a fever but you took it well."

"He must have been pampered."

"And you?"

"I myself don't know how I was brought up."

"How do you feel now?" The questioner

was a young writer, a newcomer who as yet had not been subjected to the third degree.

"Why do you want to know? You want to write a poem about it or something?" joked a bystander.

"No, I just wanted to know," the youth blushed.

I understood him. He was afraid, terribly afraid, judging from the popping out of his eyes and the quiver of his muscles.

"It hurts," I said.

"Very much?"

"Very much."

"How about your spirits?"

"I no longer have any soul."

Although I did not believe they would bring me any water nevertheless I kept my eyes glued to the door. It was not fear that prevented me from reminding them, but it was my indifference. I had not told the young writer the truth. Not only I had no soul, but I even resented the fact that I still retained my physical feelings, that I felt thirsty. The pangs which were devouring my heart would not let me lose myself in self-oblivion. And perhaps I was a little afraid of the red hot furnace.

After my beating, it seemed they forgot me for a long time until my wounds healed. And one day, after the mess, they told me gather my effects and be ready to leave. Twenty-five others from our cell received the same notice. It was plain that the hour of exile had arrived which meant that I had been sentenced in absentia.

Soon afterwards they took us into a hall where some ten to fifteen prisoner barbers were busily at work giving crew cuts. The floor of the hall was covered with a bedding of hair which came up to the knee, a mixture of all colors: red, black, dull gray, snowy white, and some brick red. Hundreds of prisoners of all nationalities and all ages, the young, the middle



aged, and the old, had been brought here that day to be shorn and to be sent to their destinations.

As soon as we were herded in the barbers fell upon us like hungry wolves, each selecting a victim and dragging him to his chair. There was no mirror, no barber's apron, no soap, nor razors. Each barber had in his hand a rusty contraption with broken teeth with which he started to shear away without asking his victim's permission. It was more of torture than a civilized haircut inasmuch as the barbers were in a hurry while their clippers pulled the roots of the hair more often than they cut it. One prisoner, unable to stand the pain, flew out of his chair but a swift and efficacious blow of the clippers on his head soon brought him to his senses and made him a very docile customer.

There is no more contemptible creature on the face of the earth than the Cheka's prison barber. At all events, three minutes later, we all were fleeced of our hair and beard, and spic and span, ready to leave. After our sartorial renovation I looked at my companions in fate but there were few among them whom I could recognize. We all looked like very badly plucked lean chickens. Our clothes and our hair had concealed the ugliness of the body in some measure, but now that our hair was gone, our emaciated heads and sunken cheeks made a comical picture. Our skulls showed the marks of the whip, either the sunken traces or the swollen bumps. After the loss of the hair the prisoner's eyes looked more inordinately sunken and lusterless, filled with blood and tears.

With our atrociously fleeced heads and faces spotted with unshaven tufts of hair, the result of the barbers' slovenliness, with our pale and goose-flesh exterior, with our raggedy clothes and with our starved and emaciated looks we looked more like the crickets of late autumn which huddle to-

gether and wither away in two hours rather than like human beings.

As soon as the last prisoner was shorn they brought us out of that barber's paradise which to me was a twice cursed dungeon than all the dungeons I had seen, and through winding corridors led us to the outer courtyard of the Cheka. It was the same courtyard which I had visited six months before. At that time the season was autumn, but to all appearances, it was spring now, because, despite the innate revulsion which clings to a Chekist courtyard, the air outside smelled of spring. I even saw a pair of newly-returned thrushes which, perched on the window sill, and wholly oblivious of our misery, were waging a heated conversation with each other in amorous tones. It seemed they were arguing about their newly-to be-built abode because the lady thrush was doing most of the talking. Women generally are more particular about the choice of their home.

A few prisoners, fresh from the prison, were busily at work tending a square shaped flower bed in the courtyard. Bent low, they pretended to be working hard but they were furtively watching us as we stood there.

The turf of the flower beds yet undug was covered with a thick layer of green grass which made me wish to reach out and caress it with my hands but which I could not do because I was not free. There was no question that it was springtime because the bushes were budding and ready to blossom forth. The sun too was vernal, and so was the heavenly canopy. My only wonder was that such a thing could happen in a Cheka's courtyard. It might happen in the courtyard, but never in the corridors of a Chekist prison.

The courtyard was thronged with hundreds of prisoners who like us were newly trimmed and yet fresh recruits continued to flow each minute from the remaining

cells. Thus, crowding, elbowing and pushing one another, the huddled multitude looked more like a flock of sheep which had been frightened by the wolves while the guards who watched over them gave the impression of shepherds.

At first the new comers covered their eyes with their hands in an effort to protect them from the brilliant daylight which cut through like a knife and pricked like a needle. Then, looking at those who had come before they grinned sheepishly. I thought this was their way of greeting one another and rejoicing at the sight of God's light. Many of them talked to each other in low tones, although, as it proved, the guards would not have stopped them if they had talked a little louder. I knew no one whom I could seek and find. There was a chance I might find the teacher whom I met because I had told him under no circumstances I would sign a false confession, and yet I had signed it. From a distance the mountain always looks small.

As I watched the newcomers pouring in I suddenly noticed an old man who, instead of covering his eyes against the light like the others, on the contrary crossed himself without fear. Thinking he was a priest who had been newly shorn of his beard I congratulated him inwardly for his courage and his loyalty to his calling. But when he came closer I recognized him. It was Kamarov. He was practically unchanged since the day I saw him for the first time in the office of the village soviet. At that time he wore a beard and the hair on his head was black, but now none of it was left except random tufts which indicated that his hair had grayed. The minute he approached us he began to scrutinize us all. Naturally, he did not recognize me. I knew that he was looking for someone and I remembered Karp Karpich.

Realizing the meeting of these two oldtimers would be interesting I kept close

tabs on Kamarov as he mingled in the crowd, craning his neck in all directions, and calling: "Karpich, a plague on your home, where are you?"

His booming voice fell upon the prisoners like the firing of a shotgun in a flock of birds who scurried away in terror, for fear of being held responsible and end with a beating. But nothing happened. Only the guards pricked up their ears and began to watch Kamarov attentively. Karpich did not respond. Apparently he was not in the crowd. Kamarov's face darkened.

"Karp Bermanov!" again Kamarov called.

Again no one responded. Kamarov was on the verge of breaking down. He mumbled under the nose which indicated his disappointment.

"Grandpa, maybe your Karpich has not yet been released," one of the prisoners volunteered, apparently fearful that his continuous callings would compromise the prisoners.

"Are they still coming in?"

"Yes."

"Thank God!" Kamarov took a deep breath. "It follows that Karpich still is alive." He edged his way out of the crowd and I followed him. Karpich was not in the next batch of arrivals, nor the second, the third and the fourth. Suddenly Kamarov's face was lit with a broad smile. It was Karpich himself, in the flesh, coming forward. With the exception of a slight limp he seemed to be undamaged.

"Karp, Karpich, my dear Karp," Kamarov rushed to his friend. The two oldtimers embraced each other, and kissed three times according to the Russian custom.

"Afanasy," — My dear brother — Karpich broke down.

"Noo, Noo," once again Kamarov wrapped his arms around Karpich's neck. "Thank God you still are alive."

"And you?" Karpich was impatient.

"Don't worry about me. I shall yet live a long time."

"Did they beat you?" Karpich asked.

"Me?" Kamarov spat with a contemptuous smile. "The man who can raise hands on me is not yet born. They tried but nothing came out of it."

Karpich was immensely proud of his pal. "I knew it, Afanisy, that you would not let them hurt you. As to myself. . ."

"What about you?" Kamarov rolled his eyes in anger.

"Karpich hesitated. "Afanisy, they tortured me."

"And you let them do it?"

"What could I do?" Karpich dropped his gaze abashed.

"The sons of . . ."

Kamarov clenched his fist. "What did they ask of you?"

"They accused me of trying to wreck the kolkhoz."

"Why didn't you tell them that was a good thing?"

"Is that what you told them?"

"That's exactly what I told them, Karpich."

"They will shoot you for it, Afanasy," Karpich was frightened.

"Their bullets cannot drill me, Karpich. Even the Whites failed to reach me. Who are they compared to the Whites?"

Karpich was really proud of his friend. "It was a good thing we found each other again."

"I will not let them ever separate you from me."

"Where are they going to take us, Afanasy?"

"I think they will drive us to Siberia to build socialism in the Taigas," Kamarov grinned.

"I wonder how our old women are faring these days?"

"If they are not already dead, they are about to die," Kamarov said looking aside.

"Mine haunts me in my dreams all the time."

"What does she want of you?"

"Always the same song: 'Karp, my Karpousha, you don't love me anymore.'"

"Oh yes, your woman is a passionate one, I know. She thinks some Chekist beauty is vamping you at your age."

"No, Afanasy, I understand her very well. Just think, the minute we got married they drafted me in the army. Four years. We came home and the war broke out. I again left her, another four years. The war scarcely over, and behold the civil war began. Because we were Reds the Whites would not let us alone. And now it is the Reds. No, don't say that, Afanas, our old women never saw a happy day."

"That's right, Karp. They deserve to see some good days."

"Attention!" a voice boomed. "Let the man whose name I call approach the desk."

I looked in the direction of the voice and saw a table which was smothered with the documents of our sentences. Behind the desk sat a Chekist surrounded by many guards. A cold shudder ran through my body. I wonder how many years they will give me, I asked myself. The vast throng was likewise trembling, some nervously, chattering the teeth. All eyes were fixed on the table which extraordinarily supported the weight of so many documents which sealed the misery of hundreds of families.

Amid the tense silence boomed the voice: "Sarokin Vasili."

"Here," Sarokin's voice trembled.

"Your father's name?"

"Ivan."

"Come forward and approach the desk." Sarokin shamled to the desk drunkenly.

"Fifteen years of incarceration in Siberia, without the right of correspondence. Sign here."

After the signing they segregated Sarokin. He now belonged to the slave class,

irrevocably, he was now a living dead. The world ceased to exist for him, and he for the world. He was through with his family, his loved ones, his friends, his comrades and his acquaintances. For fifteen years he would hear nothing from them, and they from him. During those fifteen years he would work sixteen to twenty hours a day if he ever could survive the ordeal after one year. He would work in the Taigas of Siberia in freezing air, chopping down trees with an axe, trimming the branches, and dragging the trunks to the river bank. He would have to cut down 30 to 40 such trunks a day in order to earn a daily ration of 400 grams of black bread and one liter of dirty broth boiled in fish heads. If he fell down on his quota he would be deprived of his ration and he would keep on working until he met his quota. And if he again failed, he would be beaten up and exposed to the cold from which no men return. His loved ones would wait for him for a long time. His acquaintances would ask his mother, his wife, or his father in whispers: "Any news from Vasili?" And the latter would break down and say, "Not a bit of news." Their glances at that moment would be enough to break a heart of stone.

"Krassilnikov Nicholas," boomed the chekist's voice.

"Here."

"Your father's name?"

"Peoter."

"Approach the desk. Twenty years of hard labor in Siberia without the privilege of correspondence. Sign."

"Ivanov. Twenty years. The same."

"Peresyadkin. Ten years. The same."

"Kamarov Afranasy."

"Here."

"Your father's name?"

"Vasili."

"Approach the desk. Ten years to hard

labor in Siberia, without the privilege of correspondence. Sign."

Kamarov signed the paper and stood still.

"Move on."

"Just one question."

"What is it?"

"If I had the privilege of correspondence, where would I find the paper to write on?"

There was a suppressed ripple of laughter among the prisoners.

"Move on."

"Thank you, Comrade, for your explanation!" Kamarov broke into a hearty chuckle.

Karpich joined in the chuckle. "Afnas, Afnas, you are a fool."

"Bermanov Karp. Ten years of hard labor in Siberia without the privilege of correspondence. Sign."

Karpich turned to Kamarov. "Did you hear, Afnas?"

"Yes, I heard it, Karp."

"Ha, Ha, Ha, Afnas."

"Ha, Ha, Ha, Karp."

It was the sobbing outburst of the bitterness, the disappointment, and the resentment of two oldtimers.

"Kurchenko. Fifteen years."

"Mikhajlov. Twenty years."

"Sergeyev. Twenty-five years."

"Kuznetzov. Ten years."

The ground under our feet was burning, our bodies trembling. The tension of my nerves had reached the breaking point. I was impatient to hear my sentence which would tumble me down into the abyss of suffering, torture, and oblivion. On the other hand I had an instinctive revulsion for hearing that hated name of Siberia.

However, it was not a matter of my wishing or not wishing. No one would read the inside of my soul, no one would understand that I was a man, too young yet to die, that I wanted to live, and only to live. I did not want to give up the sun, the

green and smiling vast fields, the crowded cities, the books, the newspapers, the solace of sweet music, the caress of a loved girl, the pleasure of free and unshackled labor. I abhorred the idea. But now I was a mere number, registered among millions, which is and is not. He existed only for his masters to cut down trees; if he does not exist, no matter, someone else will take his place. For my masters there were no individuals, but only numbers, and numbers have no soul. At all events, to date no one had tried to read the souls of the numbers.

"Vardanian."

It seemed I stopped breathing.

"Here."

"Your father's name? Approach the desk. Ten years of hard labor in Siberia without the privilege of correspondence. Sign."

"What did he say?"

"Ten years. Ten years, ten years, ten years." The two words seared my brain like a hot iron and kept repeating there endlessly. I was in a trance. I did not know how I signed the document, nor felt how the guard set me at the end of the row. "Ten years, ten years, ten years."

"What are you jabbering about?" asked the guard who was standing beside me, looking surprised.

"Ten years. They gave me ten years. Why do you ask?"

"I don't understand a word. Speak in Russian." The guard could not understand my mother tongue in which I was bemoaning my plight.

"They gave me ten years," I explained in his language.

"So what?" he barked in disgust.

"Attention, prisoners."

I woke up with a start. The reading of the sentences was over. The queue behind me had stretched as far as the prison building, then, zigzagging, had reached the flower bed in the courtyard. It was dark now. The table and the Chekist had disap-

peared. We were turned over to the guards.

"Attention! One step to the right or left will be regarded as an attempt to escape and the guilty one will be shot on the spot. There will be no looking sideways in the queue. Pay good attention to me and the guards. Guards! Ready! March!"

I waited for a long time until the few hundred before me were deployed and I took the first step toward hell, toward hard labor and slavery. The apartments of the Chekists were well lit. Leading out of a window, an eight year old child was watching us. A beautiful young woman, apparently the child's mother, leaned over, and seeing us instantly scolded the child? "Vania, shut the window, the stench of those people is terrible."

As we filed out of the gate the gate keeper and the assistant of the chief of the guards once again counted us, putting a hand on the shoulder of each prisoner. "251," called the soldier by my side, putting his hand on my shoulder. "251," called the chief's assistant, repeating the operation.

The street facing the Chekist building was practically deserted apparently because the people avoided it. The second street into which we filed was likewise empty, having been cleared by the Chekists. The same was true of the other streets. Thus, marching through the wilderness, we reached the rear of the station.

When we arrived, an assembled freight train already was waiting for us. They lined us up along the length and ordered us to sit down on the ground. A prisoner on foot was always dangerous. He could run away, whereas, the Soviet democracy had forbidden the chaining of the prisoners' feet. They called it the old despotic method. The hands could be chained, but the feet, never. Moreover, where could they rake up so many chains? It was not an easy matter to provide so much chain,



a minimum of 15 to 20 millions, and always workable. Such an operation would need tens of thousands of tons of iron, solid machines, and countless factories. In short, there had to be a new ministry of chain industry, with assistants, directors, architects, and thousands of workers, with the inevitable Stakhanovite norms, the black and red placards, the surmounting of the obstacles, and the yearly acceleration of the output, with its sabotages and arrests.

The ground on which we sat was chilly and disagreeable. It was a dark silent night. Along the length of the freight train could be seen the flickering of lamps, now on, now off. Apparently the guards were making sure of the security of the wagons. The hounds, bored to death from long waiting, pounced on the guards' chests and licked their faces while the latter gently pushed them back, always keeping an eye on us. To our left, far, away, bathed in lights, groaned the old city which sheltered the home of Professor Berkowsky although he no longer was there. But his daughter, Valentina Andreyevna, seemingly was there, and was probably reading a book or was crying.

Opposite us, all told a distance of several hundred feet, behind the cage wagons was the seething throng of human beings with its shouts and laughter, as if deriding our misfortune. Lantern in hand, the chief of

the guards finally reached our side. They checked the walls of the wagon opposite us, fastened the planks and the iron grates of the windows, and filed in.

Suddenly the full moon rose from behind the station. It climbed and climbed on high and seemed to stand still opposite us. There was a sort of ironic smile on its face, seeing, and yet pretending not to see us, as I thought. And perhaps it did not see us because we were hidden under the shadow of the wagons. They always kept us in the dark.

Suddenly our train moved without the signalling whistle. Slave transporting trains ordinarily do not whistle. By this time my mind was blank. All I could think of was the ten years. Ten years, ten years, ten years.

"Why?" I asked myself.

"I don't know, I don't know. Ten years, ten years, ten years.

"And what of my freedom? my passion for life? my love for Valentina Andreyevna?"

"Forget it, forget it, forget it."

Suddenly the shrill whistle jarred the silence of the night. It seemed we had reached the wilderness. The slave transport trains whistle only in the wilderness.



## *Scene From the German*

VAROUJAN BOCHOSIAN

Grunewald: central panel, The Isenheim Alter

*Grunewald understood that line  
For all of its importance had to end,  
That mass had to confine itself to space  
In order to achieve a lifelike plan.  
Defeat he said, and did not illustrate his point  
With angels pussy footing in the air.  
He placed his art in the human scene  
As in this case the death of man. . .  
A most unholy death perhaps  
But death within our hemisphere  
As Christ knew that his death would be —  
An act in time, a motion to complete.*

*Life has to balance  
And Grunewald knew the measured scale.  
He thumbed through ridged rules of weight,  
He pushed and moved weight into place  
Until his painting was correct.  
He knew that what appealed to man  
Would have to govern in this field,  
And to that end corrected things  
Until his figures stood as shapes  
As near to being in our sphere  
As man the artist could convey.  
Nothing here has been withheld,  
Nothing here remains unseen,  
We move in our own atmosphere  
With Christ the human in defeat.*

*And Grunewald knew that the act of death  
As any important act of life  
Has in its area or range  
The secondary elements.  
That light must play upon the field  
To give importance to one thing.  
He placed light so that light converged  
Step like upon the central theme.*

*See how the figures weave and lace  
About the body of the king.  
This is not something in a dream,  
This is the painting of an act,  
This is the ground of death and grief  
Recorded with a human hand.  
The painter works with what he has:  
Four grieving people and a corpse.  
Placing the mother on one plane,  
Giving her distance with her grief,  
He plays the Baptist at the right  
Who points a finger at Christ the king  
Confirming Christ's picture of kingdom come  
Giving the picture mystery  
Giving the picture a balanced need.*

*Everything here confirms the steps.  
John is correction on the picture plane  
As wrong perhaps as Mary's limbs  
But placed to give rise to the central theme  
Of Christ the hero in the human place.*

*There is no reason to go beyond  
This single panel, or the need  
Of five stark figures and a lamb,  
To arrive at a place where there is unrest,  
Where people are what you expect of them.  
These people live in the actual scene.*

*INRI the sign spells over Christ's head,  
Ye this fingers web from their earthly joints,  
The blood congeals in the man made sores  
Where the splinters of wood  
Have pierced the flesh.  
His muscles pull from the strain of his weight.  
Here is a flesh that will decay,  
Here is a suffering in art  
Conveying a suffering in life.*

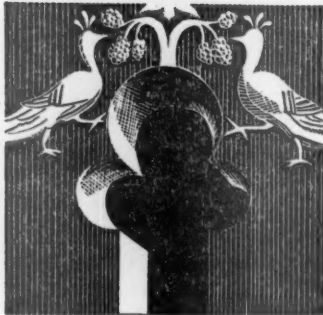
*Below the body of Christ the man  
Mary Magdalene poses well.  
We do not disagree with such a face.  
John is holding a definite weight;  
The lamb and the Baptist even the scale.*

*The importance here is the death of man —  
That we sympathize with what we see,  
That everything is placed in the order of things.*

*These women will move to calm estates.  
Though at first they bake the bread with effort, in pain,  
They will dance again with awkward steps.  
We do not care what the Baptist will do  
For he is the figure of a dream.  
Saint John will write about this death.  
A light is burning in someone's house.  
It marks a distance to a place.*

*Is there any thing else that we need to sense  
As we move through Grunewald's space with time  
In line with human grief and sound  
Upon a piece of trampled field?*

*Is there anything else,  
Is there anything new,  
About the life and death of a plan  
Beyond the circles it must complete  
More than the substance in its sphere  
That is the acid of defeat?*



# BEDROS TOURIAN

LOOTFI MINAS

Bedros Tourian was born in Scutari, Constantinople, on the 20th day of May in 1851. He was the son of a black-smith, Abraham Zumbaian. Tourian was an attractive and healthy child with dark and penetrating eyes full of intelligence. He was graduated from the Scutari High School in 1867. In school Tourian was very witty and jestful. In later years a sudden change took place in his soul and he confined himself to silence and melancholic thoughts. And he called himself a sad-jolly.

He liked music, drama, and poetry. After his graduation he was employed by an Armenian money changer; we may call him in American sense a petty financier. This position, however, was diametrically opposite to his literary temperament. For a short while he became an actor, this also was not the career he wanted. Finally, he took up teaching in an Armenian School.

Tourian's closest friend was Vartan Lootfian; this unfortunate youth also died from tuberculosis.

Tourian's literary career lasted only three years. This brief period became, mostly, the period of material disappointment, physical suffering, and despair. In 1871 he showed the ripe symptoms of tuberculosis, from which he died at the age of 21, in 1872.

Tourian is the Armenian Keats. He had the same fatal illness — the same poverty, delicacy of feeling, subtlety of fancy, and lyrical sweetness. He suffered the same premature death.

Tourian's ill-health in his early years became the source and feeding ground for

his emotional nature and passion. His pitiful heart, like that of a wounded nightingale, held in it the saddest music that ever was produced in the Armenian verse.

Art, in order to become great, wept in him. His literary talent had its roots in mental agony; the power of his melancholy expression sprang from that so did his emotions, sincerity, and character. Sensitive Tourian was far beyond the capacity of bearing all the burdens of life without expressing contempt of them. He said in one line whatsoever wounded his heart. Yet a simple spark of joy or a slight glimmer of hope would be sufficient to make him happy. But this evil world refused them for him. Therefore, he became a wanderer, and told the tragic story of his heart to the land and the sea; the sun and the moon, and finally to God — the creator of his everlasting misfortune.

Love for Beauty. This was the end of his poetic existence. To it he devoted himself. Evidently it was impossible for this poet not to love Beauty and not to give his life as the price of it.

The last five stanzas of his "The Little Lake", in Alice Stone Blackwell's translation, are remarkable instances of his despair:

*Thou art my queen, O little lake!  
For e'en when ripples thrill  
Thy surface, in thy quivering depths  
Thou hold'st me, trembling, still.*

*Full many have rejected me;  
"What has he but his lyre?"*



*"He trembles, and his face is pale;  
His life must soon expire!"*

*None said, "poor child, why pines he thus?  
If he beloved should be,  
Happy, he might not die, but live, —  
Live, and grow fair to see."*

*None sought the boy's sad heart to read,  
Nor in its depths to look.  
They would have found it was a fire,  
And not a printed book!*

*Nay, ashes now! a memory!  
Grow stormy, little mere,  
For a despairing man has gazed  
Into thy waters clear!*

Here, Tourian is all poet, a metrical artist, "a poor child", and deserted Beauty with an affinity and passion of soul for soul.

Here, as in all of his poems, he never feigns the sincerity of his sadness. No human being overcome that sadness. Therefore, he makes the little lake his queen and the only condoler of his rejected love. If he could, he would fly away from this evil world "on the viewless wings of poesy," and interpret himself to all, all the world.

But one day he changes his despair of this world for protest and indignation, against God, and at the eve of his death he rose to sublime heights of poetical powers in writing his famous "Complaints":

*Farewell, Thou Sun, and thou, O Power  
Divine,  
That far above my spirit dimly shine.  
I go to add another star to heaven: —  
For what are stars, but anguished curses,  
risen  
From innocent and hopeless souls, that fly  
To burn the brow of Heaven? And they  
supply  
Fresh armaments, and jewels fiery red,*

*To God, the source of lighting flashes  
dread!*

*Alas, what do I say? Send forth thy fires,  
O God! Consume this brain that thus  
aspires  
To soar, and dares to pierce the depths of  
heaven;  
And e'en to climb unto the stars has striven!*

*Creator of our trembling beings, hail!  
Of light and youth, of age when forces fail;  
Thou that the roses from my brow hast  
wrenched,  
Hast stilled my trembling lips, my longings  
quenched;  
Mist to mine eyes hast given, sobs to my  
breath; —  
Ah, surely thou hast kept for me a life*

*Of Fragrance, light, and prayer beyond this  
strife!  
But if my latest breath must perish here  
All Silently, in this dark atmosphere: —  
From now a flash of lightning I could be,  
Coiled round thy name, and, murmuring  
ceaselessly,  
A course I could become to pierce thy  
side: —  
God, the Arch Enemy, I would deride!*

*Ah me, I tremble, and am pale as death  
My brain seethes like a hell; a sobbing  
breath  
I am amongst the mournful cypress trees,  
An autumn leaf soon wafted by the breeze!*

*Oh I would Live! — give me of life one  
spark!  
To dream — and then embrace the grave  
so dark?  
My God, how black is this decree of doom  
Writ in the less of dread sepulchral gloom!  
Oh, give my soul one drop of living fire —  
To love — and live forever I desire!  
Ye stars of heaven, into my spirit fall,*

*There live, and hear your hopeless lover  
call!*

*To my pale brow the springtime brings no  
rose.*

*No smile for me in this world's sunbeams  
glows.*

*Night is my coffin, stars for lights flame  
round.*

*The moon all weeping seeks my funeral  
mound.*

*There are some men for whom no mourners  
sigh —*

*It was for them He placed that moon on  
high;*

*And he that to death's portals draweth near  
First life would have — then a mourner's  
tear.*

*In vain the stars of heaven spelt "Love"  
for me*

*And nightingales explained its mystery.*

*In vain of love I learnt to know the truth,  
And crystal waves reflected back my youth.*

*The secret leaves gave forth no breath or  
In vain the forest silent lay around —*

*The secret leaves gave forth no breath or  
sound;*

*They would not break upon my reverie —  
They let me dream of Love eternally.*

*All, all in vain I saw the flowers of spring  
Their incense to my dreams fair altar bring;*

*With their delights they all mocked at me —  
And all the world's but God mockery!*

(RENDERED BY ZABELLE C. BOYAJIAN  
OF LONDON, ENG.)

Behold! the pathos of Tourian's philosophy — the philosophy of which we can fathom his imperishable desire for being. He, as an Orphan of Love and Beauty, became more angry and more threatening in his "Complaints". Who was the source of his living martyrdom? Doubtless it was not only man, but God — "the Arch Enemy". Therefore he dared say, "A curse I would become to pierce thy side!"

A "spark" would be enough to make the poor poet's soul flare up to make a harmless fire like the Sun. But Tourian's hope proved delusive. He sank into the struggle of a material world with the load of his wishes and dreams. He deplored that he had been attached to life by a childish ingeniousness. In vain he looked at the flowers and the stars. In vain he sought Love and pleasure.

Yes, literary ability in telling the last word at the eve of disappearance is a poet's triumph over his creator and fellow-men. Tourian won this triumph, for he revealed in his own sufferings the force of imagination and the appreciation of eternal Beauty.

Where is the sheer merit of Tourian's poems? — It is in affection, open heartedness, and truth. Every word is starving for life. Every voice is a dynamic wish to be transformed in health. Nothing dwells in him but pessimism.

The power of seeing is so delicate, so passionate, and often childish. Although the eyes are dimmed with the mist of despair.

There is no need of attempting to analyze the elements of his composition. It is so obvious. You have a weeping youth before you. You feel his emotions and anxiety. Tourian is not rhetorical but a lyrical fascination.

His concern is to be sincere and authentic. Because the true inspiration is based on true sentiment. His psychology has a single face. So simple and pathetic. Nothing is concealed, nothing is sophisticated or repulsive. Just for this sincerity he has won our heart and our admiration.

I would like to quote a stanza that is the exact definition of Tourian's Soul.

*"He lived for Truth and Beauty; When he  
died,*

*Beauty was fain to welcome him on high,  
And kept him ever joyous by her side,  
Ranging with truth the mountains of the  
sky."*

# SOVIET COLONIALISM IN THE CAUCASUS

VAHE A. SARAFIAN

## Introduction

The Soviet Union, the physical and moral heir to the Tsarist Russian Empire, is believed by many throughout the world to have solved, once and for all time, in an equitable way the problem of local national majorities. Indeed, the friends and apologists of the Soviet Union have featured the treatment of the national groups as a key part of their *rationale* of propaganda, especially since the inauguration of the Stalinian "Nationalities Program" under the supposedly liberal Basic Law (Constitution) of 1936.

In this study, which should be considered merely an introductory investigation of a small part of the Soviet Empire, namely the primarily non-Russian geographic area of the Caucasus, it is hoped that a better understanding of the scope of the Caucasian Question (and the national question, in general) can be achieved. It is equally hoped that some progress may be made toward loosening the knot of the Soviet paradox in national treatment, for such a paradox does appear to exist, on surface acquaintance.

## Propaganda Paradox

On first thought, the Communist policy appears confusing, for it denounces nationalism as "the concomitant of capitalism," though national expression is permitted among the Soviet peoples. The question of importance is, of course, *what sort of national expression?* for *what purpose?* This

is cogently answered by the prophets of the new religion of Communism as being expression through the nation of propaganda to "re-educate" the national elements by means of national cadres of the world revolution. The function is designed, under the Communist concepts of mankind, to prepare for the ultimate success of their aim to destroy both nation and state for the coming of the world proletarian nation.

## Communist View of the State

Engels wrote about the state:

*The state . . . has not existed from all eternity. There have been societies which have managed without it, which had no notion of the state or state power. At a definite stage of economic development, which necessarily involved the cleavage of society into classes, the state became a necessity because of this cleavage. We are now rapidly approaching a stage in the development of production at which the existence of these classes has not only ceased to be a necessity, but becomes a positive hindrance to production. They will fall as inevitably as they once arose. The state inevitably falls with them.*

To Engels, as to Marx, the state is a machine for the oppression of one class by another, and "indeed in the democratic republic not less than in the monarchy."

## Communist View of the Nation

Although national groupings are recognized as existing in fact, class is held to be

the basis of social organization, rather than the nation. "Contemporary nations," taught Stalin in *Marxism and the Question of Nationalities* (Moscow, 1938), "are the result of a historic era, — the product of capitalism. With the liquidation of feudalism and the rise of capitalism, a beginning was made of . . . nationality." This analysis by a member of the proud Georgian nation, which has had a long "pre-capitalist" history of national consciousness and has been in contact with surrounding nations equally devoted to the principles of nationality, is comprehensible only in light of the necessity for irreality in Communist dialectic, which denies the validity of fact unless it conforms to the material and economic nature of Communist doctrine. Again, Lenin has said that the interests of world socialism are higher than the interests of the nation and state.

For the time being, it was necessary to recognize national differentiation as a fact to be dealt with. Lenin expressed the thought that "One cannot refuse to recognize what is; one is forced to recognize it." If a follower of the Communists belonged to the dominant people, he, as a matter of doctrinal obligation, should repudiate all privileges enjoyed by his group. If he were a member of the oppressed nationalities, he should guard against the blandishments of national unity which might upset the victory of the proletariat in the universal class struggle.

#### Russian Nation in Communist Success

In accordance with the doctrine of a world class struggle, it is contended by not only the Russian and non-Russian pro-Communist propagandists, but by the anti-Communist Russian exile elements who support the "Great Russia" stand, that throughout the Soviet Union the Bolsheviks came to power through *internal* revolutions, initiated by local forces alone, and that, in the establishment of the Soviet

regime, all the nationalities of the Soviet Union are *equally responsible*. Reuben Darbinian, an outstanding spokesman for the non-Russian peoples of the Soviet Union, finds the policy differences between the Great Russians and non-Russians regarding the future of the Soviet Empire after liberation revolve around the following:

*There can be no doubt that the Great Russians themselves in overwhelming majority are opposed to Bolshevism, as much as the non-Russians who have fallen victims. . . . (Nevertheless), there is not a single evidence to prove that the Soviet regime could have been established in any country without the support of Russian arms. Therefore, the non-Russian peoples have a perfect right to claim that the Soviet regime was forced on them by Moscow. . . . In other words, the Red tyrants have converted the Russian people into their first and foremost instrument of leverage, and through the power of this leverage exclusively have they succeeded in conquering the non-Russian peoples.*<sup>1</sup>

Believers in the preservation of the extent of the Russian Empire have adopted the slogan that "The U. S. S. R. is not Russia; Bolshevism is not the Russian people." *Possev Weekly*, the organ of a political faction of anti-Bolshevik Russian D.P.'s, wrote on July 7, 1951 that "Again and again we shall not tire of repeating: The USSR is not Russia."

#### Tsarist and Soviet Colonialism

There is a grand similarity between both Tsarist and Soviet methods in the Caucasus. If we consider method, rather than publicized aim, as the most important criterion for determining the spirit of relationship between a powerful central power and

<sup>1</sup> For discussion of such policy difference, see Reuben Darbinian: *The Unsupportable "Great Russian" Stand*; in *ARMENIAN REVIEW*, No. 18; pages 28-37.

its satellites or subjected peoples, we find much that appears similar in all Russian imperial history, whether the imperialists be called agents of the Tsars or of world communism.

The Tsarist regime functioned under twin slogans: "One Tsar, one religion, one language" and "Autocracy, orthodoxy, nationalism." This philosophy of colonial government won for the Tsarist regime's empire the opprobrious name of "prison of nations". Corliss Lamont, a pro-Soviet writer, has said that this meant "political oppression, economic exploitation, and enforced (if superficial) Russification," and that the Tsarist government made every effort to suppress non-Russian language and culture within the Empire. Of course, bad as it was, the Tsarist regime was not quite as uniformly or extensively anti-national as such pro-Soviet writers point out; their aim is obvious, to highlight an extreme picture of Tsarist policy in order to make charges of Soviet maltreatment of national groups appear unrealistic. Only an outright apologist for the Soviet system could go on to state that Soviet methods and policies toward the ethnic groups constitute a radical improvement.

A North Caucasian expresses continuity of policy in the Caucasus more exactly when he described Tsarist methods toward the mountain Mohammedans in terms significantly reminiscent of recent reports of Soviet collectivization efforts in the Caucasus and of the expulsion of "unreliable" elements after the German advances. He writes:

*We have not forgotten that genocide in the North Caucasus was begun by a Tsarist government. The Caucasian war was a war of destruction. . . . General Renekampf was ordered . . . on his expedition to Ossetiya: "To exterminate Ossetians, to spare only those who submit, to take them prisoners with wives and children, and to destroy*

*their homesteads as an example and warning to others.'*

General Tsitsianow . . . was even more colorful in his message to the Djaro-Belokans: 'Wait till I get hold of you and burn your houses and disembowel your children and wives!'

Inhabitants found alive in North Caucasian settlements after they had been taken by storm were killed off. It is not for nothing that the great Russian poet Lermontov, who took part in the Caucasian war, wrote:

*'Like savage beast, into peaceful home  
With bayonet fixed, the victors storm  
They kill the old, they slay the young  
And with bloodstained hand  
Caress innocent maid and young mother.'*

Towards the end of the Caucasian war nearly all of the North Caucasian plain was cleared of the native population. All the strategically important points were placed at the disposal of Russian settlers. Genocide was also carried out in the Western part of the country. Of the Obyh tribe, whose settlements were in the Sochi region, not one man remained in the Caucasus. The whole Black Sea coast was first depopulated and then settled with people from Central Russia . . . As a result of this first genocide, the North Caucasus lost over one million of its inhabitants. <sup>2</sup>

This policy toward the Daghestan area of the Caucasus in particular continued long past the period of the Caucasian war. A traveler could still report in 1911 that:

*The Russian government is diverting immigrants to that section of the Caucasus from other parts of the empire. . . . The revolution of the land-hungry peasants of European Russia in 1905 was followed by legislation in the duma similar to that of the British Parliament concerning Ireland,*

<sup>2</sup> Nureddin Galbats: *Grounds for the Crime; in CAUCASUS*, No. 2 (7); Feb. 1952; page 5.



and the great estates are being purchased by the government, broken up into small farms and sold to the peasants on long time at low rate of interests. . . . The landlords who still refuse to yield are having a hard time of it. Their barns are set on fire, their cattle are mutilated, their wheat fields are burned, and various other penalties are imposed upon them. There is now a law authorizing the compulsory expropriation of large estates, and the lands belonging to the crown and the church (these largely the lands of expelled natives) are being divided and disposed of slowly among peasant farmers from the more densely populated sections of Central Russia.<sup>3</sup>

### Lenin's "Self-Determination"

As part of his revolt against the established powers, Lenin could lead party gatherings of the Russian Social Democrats, in 1903, to adopt resolutions favoring the right of self-determination of all nations included in any state, and to direct the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party ten years later to assert the free use by each nationality of its native language in social life and in the schools.

Unknowing of the inner meaning of the Soviet "self-determination," many small nations throughout the world have been swayed by the proffered hand of friendship of the Soviet Union. The Soviet imperialists, deeply interested in extension into Iran, Iraq, Turkey, and Syria, in all of which substantial Kurdish numbers exist (indeed, forming the majority population in large areas of the first three)<sup>4</sup>, have utilized their hold on the Caucasus as a spring-board for propaganda and espionage by means of the residents of the Caucasus.

<sup>3</sup> William Eleroy Curtis: *Around the Black Sea*; N. Y., 1911; pages 231-2.

<sup>4</sup> Walter Kolarz, in his *Russia and Her Colonies* (N. Y., 1952), page 250, gives the number of Kurds as 1,900,000 to 4,000,000 in Turkey, 800,000 in Iraq, 700,000 in Iran, and 200,000 in Syria.

The Soviet Union inherited from Tsarist administrators a great interest in the Kurdish problem. Utilizing the approximately 80,000 Kurds of the Transcaucasus,<sup>5</sup> in 1927 the Soviet government even considered the creation of an "independent" Kurdish republic, believing that the creation of a nucleus state would have profound effects similar to the creation of the Armenian Republic; Kurdish sympathies in Iran, Iraq and Turkey would be tied to the new state, and Soviet influence would be thereby tremendously extended.

Of course, there are many other examples of Soviet "solicitude" for outside nations and national fragments; however, critics of the Soviet regime expose discrepancies between theory and practice in Bolshevik national policy. They point out that terror and military force have been employed to bring hesitant nationalities under Soviet rule at the same time that self-determination has been exalted as the right of every people.

### Falsity of Self-Determination

Armenia is a fine case in point regarding the application of Sovietic "self-determination of nations." In 1918-1920, Armenia established and maintained an independent state under the most dire circumstances. The secretly negotiated alliance between the Russian Bolshevik government and Kemalist Turkey called for the partition of the free Armenian state, and joint military activities forced the government of the Independent Republic of Armenia to "voluntarily" surrender to the Soviet power. This created, in combination with an insignificant, trumped-up "uprising" in a border area of Armenia, the fiction of accession by "internal revolution." When the Armenian people rose *en masse* in a heroic

<sup>5</sup> Kolarz discusses briefly on page 251 the variability of statistics for the Soviet Kurdish population.

revolt against the excesses of the Bolsheviks in February 1921 and re-established the independent government (the first successful revolt against Soviet rule), Red Army divisions sent by Moscow *re-occupied* Armenia and restored the hated Soviet rule. Thus, Armenia indicates the important role of the Red Army in extending the sphere of Soviet colonial rule.

The other non-Russian peoples of the Soviet Union fell under the Kremlin's yoke or were re-annexed by the use of Russian military forces. The heroes of Bolshevism in the non-Russian territories of the Soviet Union were Russians or persons who had severed their national ties and adopted Russian culture and loyalties.

#### Soviet Interpretation of Imperial History

The noted Communist historian, M. Pokrovsky, whose writings had been recognized as of worth before the October Revolution, had regarded Tsarist expansionism as imperialism and had pronounced the struggle of enslaved peoples for the recovery of their lost independence as progressive movements. After the accession to power of the Bolshevik Party, any splitting away from the Russian Empire would have meant a lesser realm for the Communists. Faced by this duality in experience, the Communists attacked Pokrovsky as regarding "every movement aimed at Russia, regardless of the nature of the movement or the aims pursued, as national-emancipatory, progressive, and even revolutionary movements."

When Pokrovsky defended his view, he met the opposition of Stalin; whereupon the leading historians were called into a committee to *rewrite* Russian history. This committee, using an adaptation of dialectic, established that all the annexations could be found to be the lesser of two evils possible for the nation involved. This became, therefore, the official way of writing Rus-

sian imperial history, implying a particularly immoral and chauvinistic kind of Russian nationalism as essential to treatment of imperial subjects.

Thus, to be under foreign rule for the Caucasus and Armenia had been a tragic part of the past, but the Tsarist confiscations were white-washed, and even the obvious evil events or neglects of Tsarist times could be defended avidly by the Communist historians.

Earlier, the Armenian Communist historian Leo had characterized the Tsarist seizure of Armenia as an absolute evil; now, the Armenian writers turned their guns on him, for the Tsars were not to blame in their anti-Armenian policy, but the faults were caused by "complex international situations". Were it not for such peculiar situations, the Russian Tsars would surely have assisted the Armenians in their struggle for emancipation.

In 1951, Professor M. Nechkina pointed out that the doctrine of the lesser evil was negative, as it involved an evil clinging to the concept. He insisted on a historical interpretation applied in such a form that the annexation is seen to yield only "good" to the annexed people. Vahan Navassardian analyzed this new position as follows:

*For example, it was a good thing for the Armenian people that non-independent Armenia was annexed to Russia (by the Tsars), on the other hand it was a good thing for the Georgian people when independent Georgia was annexed to Russia, because through the annexation close "economic, political and cultural ties were established between the Georgian and Russian peoples," a development which was both positive and progressive. After adopting this viewpoint it is no longer difficult openly to defend the Tsars.<sup>6</sup>*

Lenin himself had justified the terri-

<sup>6</sup> Vahan Navassardian: *The Nature of Bolshevism*; in *ARMENIAN REVIEW*, No. 19; page 6.

torial acquisitions of even the Tsars because, by becoming an inmate of the Peoples' Prison of the Russian Empire, the prisoner became a companion-in-fate of the Chernishevskis and Plekhanovs, "the enlightened and progressive pathfinders of the Russian workers."

Thus, history as taught in the Soviet Union today leans on the following propositions. These must be borne in mind to secure a better understanding of Soviet methods in the Caucasus.

1. *A number of nations have united with Russia seeing in this union a lesser evil.*

2. *Others have joined Russia because they have found economic, political, and cultural advantages in such a union.*

3. *The Russian Tsars, even if they have extended the border of Russia in the pursuit of their narrow class interests, nevertheless, objectively speaking, and independently of their will, they have accomplished a positive and progressive achievement.*

4. *There has never been a single Russia in history; there have been two Russias. The non-Russian peoples, by joining Russia, had in mind the progressive and enlightened Russia and not the obscurantist Russia. This enlightened Russia today is a "big brother" to the 197 younger brothers.*

5. *The magnetic power of enlightened Russia is both right and comprehensible, because this enlightened Russia has always been superior to all the other nations of the world in the fields of science, literature, and the arts.*

6. *For this very reason, it is right, natural and understandable that the Russian flag should wave over all the world.*

7. *In this expansion of Russia there is no imperialism, but there is true internationalism, unadulterated socialism, and the victory of brotherhood and equality.*

8. *Therefore, the true internationalist, the true revolutionary, the true socialist*

*is he who is with the Soviet Union as opposed to the anti-Soviet world."*<sup>7</sup>

There could be no better, more subtle, disengagingly simple sounding example of this Soviet method of history than the writing of Corliss Lamont that: "Other critics contend that in recent years, especially since the Nazi invasion, there has been a recrudescence of purely Russian nationalism and traditions. In view of the whole Soviet policy regarding nationalities, it would seem that the huge and populous Russian Republic has just as much reason to develop its cultural heritage as Armenia, the Ukraine, or Uzbekistan. Clearly the influence of this republic on the rest of the Soviet Union is very great. Since Russian is the common medium for international intercourse throughout the USSR and since it is taught as a second language in most minority territories, an appreciation of Russian literature and culture is, of course, widespread outside the Russian Republic itself."<sup>8</sup> Thus, implications are left of tremendous cultural advantage to the national areas, of the national areas being secure in the development of their national lives, and an explanation of Russian influence over other areas which sounds convincing to the uninformed — slight alterations of fact, or prejudicial presentations, such as the statement that Russian is taught as a second language, when in fact it is the almost sole language of higher education, are the heart of Soviet-style dialectics.

#### **Future of Nationalities in Soviet Theory**

Investigation into Soviet sources reveals an immediate answer as to whether the nationalities program as stated in the Constitution is basic to the Soviet program. Such study reveals that, though there is an

<sup>7</sup> Navassardian, *op. Cit.*, page 10.

<sup>8</sup> Corliss Lamont; "National and Racial Minorities"; in USSR: *A Concise Handbook*, edited by E. J. Simmons; Ithaca, N. Y., 1947; pp. 14-15.

undeniable large element of Russification involved in present-day Soviet imperialism, *the Communist philosophy per se* does not accept Russification as part of its expressed ultimate aims. The scope and aim of the Soviet policy toward the nationality program can be encompassed in the commentary of the outstanding Soviet Armenian writer P. Abelian in regard to the teachings of Stalin:

*As Comrade Stalin has said, . . . when socialism shall march triumphantly on world scale, . . . together with the state and proletarian dictatorship . . . will begin the disappearance of the nationalities, together with their languages and their cultures, making room for a universal culture . . . and one universal language. As Comrade Stalin has said, that universal language will, of course, be neither Veliko (great) Russian nor German, but altogether a new language.*

With the concept of a cultural and linguistic nationalism thus relegated to liquidation in the triumphant future, Bolshevism must next destroy the concept of the fatherland. In identical fashion, this problem is met by relegating all sentiment of fatherland, all patriotism toward place, to a liquidation by merging into one all-embracing fatherland in the future.

The charge has been made that, in view of the Communist goal of destroying the different national cultures by merging them into a unified civilization having a common language, the present nationalities program is a mere mockery. To some, it appears that this is a case of ultimates, and that "like all ultimates, the Soviet variety tends to recede into the distant future, while the transitory hardens into permanence. It is quite true that the Communists hope eventually to achieve an un-national society, just as they expect the state itself ultimately to fade away. For the time be-

ing, however, the Soviet state is no more un-national than it is non-existent." <sup>9</sup>

### Soviet Federalism

Soviet spokesmen, in answering the charge that the nationalities program is a mockery, cite the decree of January 1944, of the Tenth Session of the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R., which "permitted" the sixteen Union republics to set up their own commissariats for war and foreign affairs. This apparent concession to a desire for a "communist federalism" prevalent in lands taken by the Soviet authorities seemed at the time a promise of liberalization of nationalities' treatment along the lines earlier foreshadowed in the federalistic viewpoint of Rykov, who had been elaborately tried and liquidated because of his willingness to allow the "fulfillment of some moderate national aspirations"; "Rykov did want to alter the status of the non-Russian nationalities, not to please imperialism but to do justice to the peoples of the Soviet Union." <sup>10</sup>

However, this January 1944 decree is a meaningless "reform," probably never intended to be put into practice except for propaganda purposes, for the Moscow authorities formulate obligatory policies and all basic principles, and the U. S. S. R. is ruled by a Communist Party dictatorship which permeates all governmental machinery and all aspects of public life in all areas under Soviet control. The actual degree of autonomy possessed by the nationalities in the U. S. S. R., even in Republics, Autonomous Republics, and Autonomous Regions, is problematically minute.

### National Secession

Therefore, the Soviet Union, on paper, could grant all sorts of freedoms to subject peoples, knowing well that they could never be utilized contrary to the measures

<sup>9</sup> Oscar I. Janowsky: *Nationalities and National Minorities*; New York, 1945; page 96.

<sup>10</sup> Kolarz, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-11.

the rulers of the dictating party believed necessary to the course of the world revolution. The greatest latitude seems to have been granted, even the right (by the 1936 Constitution) of *secession*. Stalin himself set the pattern for dealing with secessionary tendencies, which are universal among the non-Russian peoples of the Soviet Union and are especially strong in the Ukraine and among the Caucasian peoples, when he wrote in 1920:

*We are opposed to the secession of the Russian irridenta because such separation would mean their enslavement by the imperialists, would deal a blow to the Russian Revolution, and consequently, . . . (would strengthen) the imperialistic positions.*

Stalin had earlier declared, in 1913:

*A Nation has the right to arrange its life on autonomous lines. It even has the right to secede. But this does not mean that it should do so under all circumstances, that autonomy, or separation, will everywhere and always be advantageous for a nation, i. e., for a majority of its population, i. e., for the toiling strata.*

The masses are incapable of correct judgements and should, therefore, submit to the dictatorial tutelage of the Communist leaders of the proletariat as the guardians of national, as well as class, interests. Therefore, "even if the masses of a certain nationality determine to secede from the Soviet state, that decision may be scorned as a symptom of ignorance or heresy."<sup>11</sup>

Directly regarding the independence of the states of the Caucasus, Stalin wrote in 1920:

*The demand of the bordering countries for secession from Russia . . . is unacceptable . . . because such secession is contrary to the interests of both. . . . those seceded will be subjected to the slavery of imperialistic powers. Suffice it only to cast a glance at Georgia, Armenia, Poland, Fin-*

*land, and others which have entirely preserved the semblance of independence, while in reality they have become . . . vassals . . . ; suffice it, finally, to recollect what took place in the not too distant past between Ukrainia and Azerbaijan, as the former was being looted by German capitalists, and the latter by the capitalists of the Entente, in order to grasp fully the entire counter-revolutionary nature of the demand for secession of the bordering countries. . .*

Stalin continued: "The so-called independence of so-called Georgia, Armenia, Poland, Finland, etc. is merely a deception which conceals the dependence of the so-called states on this or that faction of the imperialists."

Thus, even the foreign pro-Soviet apologists have been constrained to remark that there is genuine doubt whether a republic of the Soviet Union could really carry through its constitutional right of secession. The importance of nationalist sentiment, national communism, or communist federalism has been a problem of the first magnitude to the Soviet authorities; it is beyond question that all non-Russian areas of the U. S. S. R. would gladly secede if the opportunity could be found. Even news columnists such as Drew Pearson have begun to report the danger of secessionistic activity is a great worry to the Soviet leaders, basing their rule on Russian force as earlier pointed out, for "the population of the Soviet Union is 54 per cent. non-Russian".<sup>12</sup>

### The National Areas

To extravagantly picture the national areas as being completely Russian in appearance and administration would be a grave error, however, for, though the Russian is the common and almost universally prevalent mainstay of Soviet state strength

<sup>11</sup> Janowsky, *op. cit.*, page 80.

<sup>12</sup> Drew Pearson, MERRY-GO-ROUND; in *Boston Traveler*; Mar. 10, 1953.



despite the suffering of the mass of the Russian people under Soviet rule, a certain facade of national participation is maintained. Under the principle of *korenisatsiya*, which is the gradual replacement of Russian party and state officials in national territories by natives, it would appear that gradually the national elements become more assertive and responsible, similarly to British or French colonial policy. In actuality, however, the appointed "native" is generally a figurehead surrounded and guided by Russians.

Because of the overwhelmingly Russian character of the Communist Party, even in a number of the national areas, and because of the planned breakup of national areas through colonization and employment methods, the ultimate result of Soviet Russian imperialism can only be a growingly Russian character even in the non-Russian areas. Indeed, from "economic necessity the Soviet regime is inflicting a double blow on the non-Slav peoples; it pumps Russian and Ukrainian skilled workers, specialists and officials into the territories of the small Soviet nationalities and recruits unskilled labour from among the latter to send them to Russian industrial centers, in an endeavour to solve the manpower problem there."<sup>13</sup>

#### Direct Genocide as Policy

Though the Tsarist government had followed a policy of extermination on several occasions toward selected Caucasian peoples, as we have earlier seen, a writer (Edgar Snow) in 1944 could write without public opposition:

*Wars between the Slavs and the Germans, and wars in the past between the Russians and Poles and Finns, have often been, it is true, wars of no quarter between troops. . . But ruthlessness as between armies is one thing and the wholesale destruc-*

*tion of civilian life is quite another. There is no evidence in recent wars of a high command adopting extermination of the civilian population as a general policy, until Hitler.*

Yet, despite such evidences of confidence in the humanitarianism of the Russian psyche, in 1896 the Russian minister of foreign affairs, Count Lobanoff-Rostowsky, had stated clearly: "We need Armenia, but without the Armenians." We have earlier seen examples of Russian Tsarist military actions against civil populations as ethnic groups; we shall now test Soviet methodology for its humanitarian content.

Hitler is reported to have stated that: "We must resort to all means to bring about the conquest of the world by the Germans. If our hearts are set upon establishing our Great German Reich, we must above all things force out and exterminate the Slavonic nations — the Russians, Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Bulgarians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians. There is no reason why this should not be done."

In what *integral* way does this differ, one might ask, from the repeated views of the Soviet leaders that, as Lenin said, "The emancipation of several European great nations must be set above the emancipation of small nationalities. The interests of the special should be subordinated to the interests of the whole." Or, as Stalin wrote, "The real essence of the Bolshevik approach to the national question consists in this that the Bolsheviks regard the national question as inseparable from the revolutionary outlook."

The national attitude of the Tsarist government in the Caucasus was fairly obvious, revealed in the actions in North Caucasus, as well as in the attempt in 1903 to destroy the Armenian church and schools, and in the Tsarist instigation of Turco-Tatar attacks on the Armenians in the Caucasus in 1905. That of the Soviet

<sup>13</sup> Kolarz, *op. cit.*, page 16.

imperialists has been more adroit and more circumspect.

In the half-decade from 1941 to 1945, three autonomous republics of the R. S. F. S. R. were totally liquidated (German Volga, Chechen-Ingush, and Kalmyk), while the Karachayev autonomous region of the Caucasus was likewise liquidated, and the Crimean autonomous republic was reduced to the rank of a region. It is reported that the native populations of the five national units were deported to trans-Ural localities; the abolition of the national territories was accomplished by order of the R. S. F. S. R. Council of Ministers, and seems to imply a consolidation of Russian occupancy, along the lines earlier discussed.

*The transplantation of entire ethnic groups beyond the Urals has increased since the end of the World War II in both scope and brutality. It must be added that the conditions of life and labor discipline deliberately inflicted on the deportees in concentration camps are calculated to bring about their physical destruction; that by separating the deported men from their wives, the M. V. D. imposes conditions intended to prevent births within deported groups; that the deportees' children are separated from their mothers and are placed in orphanages — all of which acts mean willful destruction, in whole or in part, of national, or ethnic groups.*

... The fact that the Soviet process of genocide is most intense in the Soviet Union's frontier lands, with their potentially hostile populations, and the systematic infiltration of them with people presumably loyal to the regime demonstrates the inhuman measures which the Soviet government is willing to take, and amounts to an attempt to wipe out biologically autochthonous populations.<sup>14</sup>

### Indirect Genocide

Leaving aside the questions of unequal treatment of the national elements in the Soviet Union during the forced collectivizations and the liquidation of the kulaks, as there is not sufficiently clear evidence as yet of any distinct policy toward the national groups in these, we are faced with the question of the actual treatment of the national "minorities," (actually *majorities* in their national areas in all but a few cases).

As a matter of policy, it becomes evident, that further developing on the old Tsarist doctrines of inequality in practice, the Soviet authorities have subjected the Caucasian peoples to unusual treatment. We have discussed the liquidation of certain national areas by decree. However, a physical liquidation of rather large proportions has been instituted in other ways. During the Soviet-German aspects of the Second World War, an unusually heavy drain was made on the manpower of the Caucasian peoples, always with the partial exception of Soviet Georgia, which appears to have held a favored position in the Soviet scheme, not only during wartime, but since the earliest days of Stalin's dictatorship.

### The Ukrainian Example

In the mid-Twenties the Bolsheviks of the R. S. F. S. R. had conceded to the Ukrainian residents the right of "Ukrainization," that is the resumption of their cultural activities. The largest segment of Ukrainians in the R. S. F. S. R. were residents of the Caucasus, toward which the Soviet has bent special efforts at Russification. Alarmed by the enthusiastic response of the large Ukrainian population in the Kuban and adjacent areas, and beginning to feel "wronged" as Russians, "in the middle of the 1932-1933 school year the Ukrainization activity was stopped . . ." by the R. S. F. S. R., and Stalin

<sup>14</sup> G. C. Gecys: *Equality of Rights of the Soviet Nationalities*; in *RUSSIAN REVIEW*, Vol. 12, No. 2; Pages 108-109.

and Molotov ordered an intense Russification, in effect. It is worthy of note that no such "absolute ban on Ukrainian activities was ever put into effect even by the tsarist regime. . . Even the traditional Shevchenko celebrations had to be 'forgotten!' Ukrainians in the Russian SFSR were forbidden even to subscribe to any Ukrainian newspapers, such as 'The Communist' or any others which were published in the Ukrainian SSR. . ." A major result of the 1932 ban was that the Ukrainians in the R. S. F. S. R. were not even allowed to list themselves as such in the 1937-1939 Census, but were forced to classify themselves as Russians.<sup>15</sup> This highly important fact should be kept in mind regarding not only the Ukrainians, but other peoples out of favor with the Kremlin leaders, for it is vital to realize the propaganda intent of Soviet statistics, and their scientific worthlessness.<sup>16</sup>

The treatment of the Ukrainians (including the Cossacks in this category) by the Russian S. F. S. R. is not unique; national oppression is far more common within the Soviet republics, apparently, than the public record would indicate. Even in this, the Soviet authorities can find advantages, for the degree of oppression can be controlled, groups can be played against each other, and the Russian state benefited. The use of non-Russians for Russian colonization and colonial policies implementation (such as the weakening of particular blocs, as Kirghizistan, etc.) is thoroughly and systematically organized by the Soviets.

<sup>15</sup> Discussion of Ukrainian treatment is from V. Chaplenko: *Ukrainians of the Russian Soviet Republic*; in UKRAINIAN QUARTERLY, Vol. VII, No. 1; 1951.

<sup>16</sup> The question of Caucasian population statistics is investigated by V. Sarafian: *The Problems of Caucasian Population Statistics under Tsarist and Soviet Rule*; in ARMENIAN REVIEW, No. 23; pp. 107-124.

### Armenians in Other Republics

A rather comprehensive study of the treatment of the large Armenian colonies encompassed within the territorial borders allotted to Georgia and Azerbaijan appeared recently, in which it was indicated that treatment of the Armenians in Soviet Georgia is based on absolute and forcible assimilation. All Soviet republics are faced with a minority question to some degree, but treatment shows a great variability, depending on Kremlin attitudes. International factors could even enter the picture of the internal relationships of the Soviet districts and populations, as in the case of Karabagh, Armenian inhabited but Azerbaijan-occupied, which Azerbaijan's government head Nariman Narimanov announced as yielded to the Armenian Soviet State on its establishment, as a gesture of fraternal feeling. Despite this official and public action, the transfer of Karabagh to Armenian rule never did take place, reportedly because of pressure by the Turkish government, then the ally of the Soviet Union. In any case, Communist writer Borian has stated that: "By treaty agreements she (Turkey) forced Soviet Russia to bear down on Soviet Armenia."

### Purges in Assimilation Policies

Soviet Republics, in carrying out purges of the supposedly counter-revolutionary forces of dissatisfaction, as has been frequent in Soviet history, seem to have been not always loath to utilize the police power for the pursuance of chauvinistic purposes. In the case of Georgia, again, these purges hinted of national chauvinism; indeed, at times they have been employed directly for the furtherance of assimilation of non-Russian residents of the Georgian Soviet Republic. Even in the extensive purges in Soviet Georgia in 1951-1952, national aspects are traceable, as in the ousting of Medoyev, the First Secretary of Southern

Ossetia, an autonomous part of the republic, but heavily subjected to Georgianization, as are the Armenian areas of Georgia also. Indeed the campaign against other national elements in the republics may reach the extremity achieved in the relatively favored Georgian state of destruction of cultural monuments and the razing of cemeteries of other peoples in order to erase their evidences and consciousness.

### Change After Stalin's Death?

Since the death of Stalin, with the sudden arrest and execution of Beria which followed, there is no doubt that a drastic change in nationality relationships or policy may be in its initial stages. It is too early to know what that change may be, but Stalin's death may well mark a turning point in the slow Russification carried on to date under an aura of national expression. Speculation on form or trend would be premature at this point, however.

A proper study of the full details of actual Soviet national policies is far beyond the scope of this brief survey. However, the necessity for opening up of relatively new lines of inquiry for a better understanding has, I trust, been made clear. Neither the well-disguised propaganda of the Soviet imperialists nor the fragmentary information given in national publications is sufficient to secure a proper historic view. It is one of the tragic features of the divided world that, in the demoralized state of world society, those who suffer most under reactionary (almost feudal) colonialism as practiced in the Soviet Empire are given the least chance to be heard. Western imperialism, on this score if no other, has proved to be far less stringent and far more humane.

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# MY UNCLE HACHIK

ZABELLE YESSAYAN

My Uncle Hachik's bronze manly face is but a dim image now in my childhood recollections. He was my uncle from my mother's side. It is quite possible that his was one of those smiling and familiar faces which leaned over my cradle, exciting my earliest vision.

When I was scarce six or seven years old he impressed me as the most perfect specimen of the human race. He was truly handsome then, tall and powerfully-built, with black dilated pupils and arching eyebrows one of which was perched slightly higher giving his face at times a surprised, and at times a vexed expression.

He lived away from us, in Pera the European quarter of Istanbul, where he maintained his private shop. He was a blacksmith by trade.

The folk at our home pronounced the name of my Uncle Hachik with a shudder tinged with extreme resentment. They swore by his name, and yet they were ashamed of him. They worshipped him like an idol, and at the same time they hurled covert recriminations against his name. There was no doubt that something serious had happened, and whatever it was, it was irreparable.

When my grandmother, seated in a corner of the sofa, cast scornful glances at her countless daughters, no one dared utter a single word against her favorite son. But the minute she retired the wagging tongues would break loose. There were exchanges of mournful sighs and dark, reproachful references. Sometimes all the

folk were unanimous in opinion, and sometimes they would break into two opposing factions, and the controversy invariably ended in bitter recriminations and copious tears.

My grandmother, on her part, was adamant in regard to the "irreparable" happening. There was the stamp of a perpetual bereavement on her delicate face which was white like a holy relic and furrowed with wrinkles. Her maternal pride so deeply had been wounded that she preferred to remain silent, rather than to utter a word of complaint against the behaviour of her son.

What really had happened was a secret to me for a long time. And then, one day I accidentally heard that my Uncle Hachik had simply married a Greek girl he loved.

My Uncle Hachik was the favorite of my Grandmother, the most loved of all her countless children, and none of the sisters or the brothers rebelled against this preference. He was the most successful of my Grandmother's children, so to speak. Not only was he handsome but he made plenty of money, and he expended his earnings not on himself but for the enjoyment of others. His every deed, the echo of which reached us, evoked a silent admiration and awe in all of us. When, on rare occasions, my Uncle Hachik paid his mother a visit the event would arouse the whole neighborhood. Generally he came on a Saturday and spent the Sunday with his mother. That day the confectionary and ice cream vendors would linger in the street, the



sellers of rare fish and fruits would make a trail from the central market place to our quarter of the city and would sing the praises of their choice wares.

When he stopped inside the threshold of the home he would bring with him the abundance of the sun. The doors of the courtyard and the garden would open, the curtains would swell and would whip against the windows like the sails of a ship, and the neighbors, taking courage, would shuffle in and out, my aunts would don their best clothes and would assume the airs of sort of independence, but most amazing of all, my Grandmother's sad wrinkled face would be lit with a rare smile. It was a trembling smile, full of tenderness, and when she measured her son from head to foot with her fond eyes, there was no limit to her admiration and pride.

My aunts would scurry to the kitchen where the clomp clomp of the clogs and the sounds of ringing laughter filled the air, while my father, the perennial newspaper in his hand which he usually held before his face like a curtain, folded the paper and picked up the conversation with Uncle Hachik. As to the children, ecstatic with joy, they would poke their hands in their pockets full of candy, pistacho, and all kind of dried fruits.

Until the death of Grandmother the wife of Uncle Hachik did not set foot on our threshold. It was too late when we learned that the fondest ambition of that poor Greek woman was to become reconciled with her mother-in-law. But Grandmother not only was adamant, but never tolerated the mention of that woman's name in the home. That poor woman was a sort of anathematized, excommunicated creature. As the years passed, instead of softening, Grandmother was all the more fortified in her feeling, in view of the fact that this marriage which was based on love proved sterile and my Uncle Hachik never had a

son. As time passed my Uncle Hachik's face in turn was streaked with lines. Somehow, he too soured on life. Perhaps he ascribed this tragedy of his to his mother. The fact was, my Uncle Hachik's gayety slowly was extinguished, his visits became rarer, and finally he stopped coming.

On the eve of each holiday, however, a new hope was born in my Grandmother's desperate heart. Without saying anything about her expectations, she would order a thorough house cleaning, my Uncle Hachik's nightgowns, white as snow, would be hung on the garden clothes line, the sleeves hanging low, and woe unto us if we crossed under that wet, sprawling linen and as much as a hair touched it to stain its purity, or in the enthusiasm of our childish games we brushed against the pole which supported the clothes line. The room where my Uncle slept would become the object of meticulous and painstaking care. Even the ceiling would be given a thorough washing, to say nothing of the house which would be damp like a public bath and the air filled with the smell of the soaking floor. We no longer knew where to sit down, where to walk, how to live. In the evening my father would grumble, taking refuge behind the broad

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#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Zabelle Yessayan, indisputably the foremost Armenian woman writer of the century, was born on February 4, 1878, in Scutari, a suburb of Istanbul. After completing her Armenian education in the schools of the Turkish capital, she attended Sarbonne, Paris, where she specialized in literature. A realistic, temperate, deeply humane, and psychoanalytical writer, she has written numerous works, foremost among which are her "Amid the Ruins," — a graphic description of her impressions after the Armenian deportations of 1915, and "Silihdari Bardeznereh" which is her autobiography. After the sovietization of Armenia in 1921 she was invited by the Bolsheviks to come to the fatherland with lavish promises, but after a few years, she was exiled to Turkestan along with a host of veteran Armenian intellectuals. She has not been heard from ever since and it is generally assumed that she was liquidated together with her hapless companions in fate.

folds of the newspaper which he read from end to end to restrain his choking impatience.

Dinner time, the ladies of the house, weary like Pharaoh's slaves, would lose their appetite and would surrender themselves to their sobbings. Inwardly, each realized that those elaborate preparations were for nothing, yet none of them dared express her opinion. Embittered by the disappointment which surely would ensue on the morrow, they would linger in the room silent and pensive, as if they were not on speaking terms with one another. They did not have the heart to even light the lamps. Perhaps they did not want to see each other's face. And thus, one by one, they would retire for the night.

Finally one day Grandmother decided herself to pay a visit to her son. This decision was the result of intense spiritual struggles, fearful nights, and arduous hesitations.

That morning I woke up at sunrise and went down to the parlor where my Grandmother was having her third cup of coffee only after which her lips opened, and that with great reluctance. As she looked at me with her sad, dumb eyes it seemed the germ of a new idea was born in her mind, then she shook her head doubtfully. But the idea gradually took form and she disclosed it to my aunts in her broken words.

I still remember that glorious rosy morning as the sun peeped across the horizon through the yellow clouds. The birds were holding a symphony in the garden. Standing there before the open window, blissfully oblivious of mundane cares, I was drinking the cool, exhilarating morning air. It seemed life with its joys, like mounting waves was rolling on and on toward me. I was intoxicated with the fragrance of the roses, with the sunlight, and the bubbling vitality inside me. The future was being unfolded before me like a miracle, with

swiftly-following flashes of the imagination. I was happy and purposeless with exultation and boundless joy. My entire body was being lofted on life's horizon like the newly rising sun and the nectar of the honeysuckle was on my lip.

My aunts, meanwhile, were making quite an ado over dolling me up, with prolific murmurs of pity and solicitation. "My poor *Makhsoom*" — "My poor, poor child," I would hear them say every once in a while. Why should they pity me? I wondered. What was there in that Pera which all un-animously regarded as hell? Perhaps they were pitying me for the role of mediator which was reserved for me, or because I would be the witness of the awesome spectacle — the meeting between mother and son.

Uncle Hachik's blacksmith shop was located on the fringe of the road along the Cemetary of Pangalti. By this time my Uncle was a completely transformed man, gloomy, surely, and unapproachable, very taciturn. His perched eyebrow was expressive now only of anger. Who was he angry at? What did he want from people generally? It seemed he was under some spiritual constraint, obeying as it were some inner law, forced to carry through life a reluctant role. At times I thought he did want to smile and be gay, but something held him back. Somehow he had lost his freedom.

That day we took the ferry boat and crossed to Beshigtash and from here we climbed the ascent as far as Pangalti. Holding my hand, my Grandmother trudged on slowly, indifferent and listless to the colorful multitude which the nearness of the imperial palaces crowded on the great avenue of Beshigtash. To me, the journey presented a constantly changing panorama of magic scenes. The bright yellow, rose, and blue *entaris* of Turkish ladies dazzled my eyes.

I loved being terrified by the damp eyes of the tall thin negroes. The women's shrieks, the vendors' melodious singing, the fragrance of acacia which exuded from the imperial gardens, the golden dust of the streets, the colorful refreshments in front of the stores, the candy roosters and the drums transported me to a land of legends through which we glided like ghosts. Finally, weary of what I had seen and the flights of my imagination, my lips parched, I had a mind to stop in front of the public fountains where the beggars and the Dervishes, sprawled there at the base, seemed to be consuming the whole joy of life by listening to the water's murmur. At times my Grandmother would stop, and opening her lean purse with her thin fingers, would slip a ten cent piece to the beggars, Mussluman or not, without discrimination, until all the little coins were gone.

On the slope of Gazhaneh my Grandmother released my hand and the two of us slowly trudged our way through the dust of the road. By now my bonnet was loose on the back of my neck and my arms weighed heavily on my shoulders. Every now and then I stopped and looked back. Far away, beyond the palaces and the coastal quarters, the Bosphorus was scintillating under the showering sunrays. Now and then a gentle breeze, rising from below, cooled our perspiring brows. Finally we reached the Turkish quarters, and being through with the arduous ascent, we walked more briskly. Vacant and abandoned *Keosks* — former luxurious Turkish mansions — with their broken windows behind which fluttered rich fold of muslin curtains, finally forced my Grandmother to break her silence. She stopped and looked, and as if speaking to me, murmured: "How much blood, how much tears, these things have cost!" She sighed deeply, then we resumed our journey.

As we come nearer to Pera my Grandmother was quite out of breath. She stopped more often. She would take her white handkerchief, and wiping off her brow, would murmur: "*Phark Kez Asdvadz.*" Thank Thee, O Lord. That road was the Golgotha of her maternal affliction.

As we hit the square of Pangalti she let me go on alone. I could not understand the dread which had seized my Grandmother. What was it that had brought the relations between mother and son to this pass? It seemed there was a silent struggle between the two which had brought about this forced distance. Otherwise they loved each other passionately, with pride and admiration. What was it that prevented them from looking at each other, kissing each other, sitting down and conversing happily, as so many mothers do with their sons?

When we approached the shop and heard the clatter of anvil and hammer my Grandmother lost all energy. She paled and began to hesitate. Just then I rushed into the shop like one gone mad, found my Uncle, clung to his neck and began to kiss and chatter, ask questions without waiting for answers, and to answer without being questioned. My Uncle's sunburnt and heavily perspiring face relaxed, his eyes smiled on me, and he made impotent efforts to keep me away lest my clean clothes were dirtied by brushing against his sooty leather apron.

My Uncle Hachik instantly stopped his work, turning his tools over to his apprentice. He took off his apron and issued orders to his helpers. Then he went to wash up, but changing his mind, returned to his work, leaving me to surrender myself to my ecstasies of a newly-found world. I loved to wander in the semidarkness of this new workshop, I loved to watch the white heat of the furnace, the moulding of the red hot iron on the anvil under the

ringing metallic blows of the hammer, the sizzling of the metal in the water, and the smell of the fire. At those moments my Uncle Hachik looked like a towering giant to me. His bare hairy chest and his rolled up sleeves gave me the impression of a mighty power which thrilled me, and I felt really proud as his calm voice issued orders to his men in the tumult of the shop.

It was plain that my Uncle Hachik was really pleased seeing me, despite his superhuman efforts to conceal his feelings. And yet, my childish instinct was not mistaken and I dealt with him boldly, although this harsh method of mutual affection was entirely alien to my nature. He surmised that his mother was anxiously waiting for him in the cemetery behind the shop. And yet he was in no hurry. Wholly ignorant of those mental convulsions from which mother and son were suffering equally, I kept frolicking around and saw no reason why this Arabian Nights of mine should ever come to an end.

My Grandmother was seated on a tomb stone under the shadow of an elm tree, her two worn white hands planted on her knees, staring ahead. At times she would turn her dark piercing eyes on me, as if wanting to ask a question. At times her anger shone in the fixture of her pupils. When my annoyance was too much for her she made a vague gesture of the hand, ordering me to leave her alone.

Then I started to wander in the lanes of the ancient cemetery, lined with worn out tombstones. In the tall old trees my eyes were looking for that wondrous berry which generations of children had cherished. Finally when I located two or three, there was no bound to my happiness. Then I stretched myself on the soft grass, and my eyes fixed on the rocking canopy of the branches, I lay there enchanted. The rustle of the balanced and constantly waving scintillating

leaves seemed to be telling me a story. My heart came to my mouth when two tops of branches brushed against each other and exchanged murmurs. Far above, in the rolling canopy of the sky, a white speck drifted lazily and vanished from view. Here it was that, for the first time in my life, with boundless confusion and with an impossible dread, I reflected on my solitude in the vast universe.

When at last my Uncle emerged from the back door of the shop I ran to my Grandmother. My Uncle advanced with slow, steady steps, grinding the gravel under his feet. As if further to delay his approach, he took out of his pocket his tobacco pouch and started to roll a cigarette. He did not look at his mother, just as if their meeting was the continuation of an interrupted conversation.

"Sit down," my Grandmother finally, said with pale trembling lips.

My Uncle slouched to the nearby coffeehouse to get a chair. It seemed he was looking for an excuse to delay his return. He chased the chicken and the dogs or accosted a stranger. But when all the excuses were exhausted he returned with a stool and sat down opposite my Grandmother.

They had a thousand things to talk about, of course, and yet neither spoke. I watched my Uncle's wrinkled forehead, the jutting eyebrow, and the nervous fingers with which he was trying to roll the cigarette and yet the cursed cigarette would not roll. I thought that might be the reason why my Grandmother and my Uncle were angry at each other, because my Uncle started to complain angrily about "the quality" of the cigarette paper.

After all this my Uncle's face relaxed, he looked at me, and then turning fondly to his mother, he asked in a gentle voice: "Has the kid had anything to eat?"

The ice was broken and mother and son

plunged into an intimate conversation. Grandmother had never spoken to anyone so tenderly and so fondly as when she repeatedly called her favorite son: "Yavroum, Hachik!" "My son, my son Hachik."

There was no exhibition of gushing emotion, nor did they talk about compelling matters. They talked about common every day things, seven different people who did not belong to the family, nevertheless, in that trivial conversation they had found a moment to enjoy the sweet tranquility for which they had longed for long months. It was like the satisfaction of an unquenchable thirst, the attainment of an unattainable aim.

This went on for about two hours. My Grandmother rose to her feet, the signal to leave. My Uncle accompanied us as far as the street and kissed my Grandmother's hand. My Grandmother's eyes were misty, and she in turn kissed her son on both cheeks. Dazzled by this exhibition of maternal and filial love, I looked with fascination from one to the other and I noticed that my Uncle's face again darkened. Displeased with his mother's tears, he dropped his eyes sullenly.

"Don't be angry with me, Yavroum," my Grandmother murmured, and instantly added: "Why don't you come to Scutari some day? It will be a good change for you."

"What is wrong with the air of Pera?" my Uncle shot back.

At that moment my Grandmother re-

covered her poise. She turned away as if from a distant house whose windows and doors were closed to her forever. She shot a contemptuous look at the noisy avenue and spat out the words: "For the life of me I don't know what they see in this Pera."

"Even the God of Pera is different," my Uncle replied angrily. But he instantly relaxed and wishing no doubt to make the parting friendly, and for the want of something else to say, he advised us how to proceed on our way so that we would not be run over by some carriage, that we might not get lost, and lastly, that we might not miss the boat.

Years later one evening when my father and I were picking roses in the garden the scent of a rose reminded me of that fragrant morning when my Grandmother decided to take me along to see my Uncle Hachik. My father was soliloquizing quietly as he picked the roses: "The greatest happiness of man!

Suddenly I interrupted him. "Father," I asked, "why did Uncle Hachik hate Grandmother?"

My father stopped, and looking at me affectionately, said, "On the contrary, child, he loved Grandmother with a love which was beyond his power. It is not every man who has the necessary power to love. One must be strong to bear cheerfully such a crushing burden on his soul." (Translated from the Armenian by J. G. M.)





# GROWTH of ARMENIAN MUSIC AFTER KOMITAS

ONNIG BERBERIAN

Komitas the distinguished Armenian composer left behind him a splendid legacy for the Armenians. It was Komitas who in the latter part of the 19th century put the Armenian popular music to notes and introduced the choral singing. Prior to that, for approximately 80 to 85 generations, Armenian popular music was non-choral. He selected for the object of his task the composition of that part of Armenian music which was truly tribal while the chorus which he introduced bears the deep imprint of the Armenian national character.

By saying Komitas we more specifically have in mind a definite period in which his immediate pupils and all those who have emulated the great teacher directly or remotely played a definite role.

The question is, how shall we make use of this heritage left to us by Komitas? And it is right here that the two factions, the exponents of convention and the progressive school, enter the scene, much the same as it happens in human history every time an old heritage is transmitted from the old generation to the new.

This is true with respect to all fields of culture. In science, insofar as it pertains to the search of truth, including the methods of exploration and the essential nature of that truth; in the trades, insuring the means of man's economic welfare; in the arts, the search for the essential nature of the beautiful and the aesthetic, and the various

forms of its manifestation; and lastly in ethics, the various forms of resolving the human conscience, all of which are susceptible to changes with the times.

The conventionalists tenaciously cling to the old forms in their solicitude to preserve intact the legacy which they have inherited, while the progressives advance new methods of the search of truth to improve the lot of the common man, to enhance the esthetic sense, and to evolve the perfect man.

This much is certain that if the conventionalists had their way today we still would be living in the stone age and our vehicles would be rolling in the streets on square wheels, all of which goes to prove that all the benefits of an enlightened civilization we enjoy we owe to the progressives.

It is quite irrelevant to examine here the exact share of the traditionalist and the revolutionary in this achievement. Manifestly, both factions work together and have an equal share every time man takes a new step, from one generation to the other, on the road of life.

The necessity of discovering a new form of music is the contingency of the post-Komitas era. The question basically is this. The Armenians are men of the 20th century, just as much as the Americans, the French, the Germans, the Italians, and the other civilized nations of the world, living side by side with them. The question is, will the feeling of their national honor,

the innate urge to respect and be respected by others by virtue of their own merits, permit the Armenians to continue to remain on a lower cultural level than the others? The fact is, as far as music is concerned, we do not measure up to the European standards. We do not possess a high level of music which will be recognized by the Europeans. The Europeans know that we possess a splendid folklore, but as far as music is concerned, they recognize the Armenians as a people which as yet has not attained to its tribal heights and still remains on the popular level. And right here our conventionalists and progressives the traditionalists and the revolutionaries, take over. In this contest the conventionalist is the people, the progressive, the composer.

The Armenian people is not used to hearing any other kind of music except its popular songs. It loves to hear these songs in their old form and resents any tampering with them by the new composers. It abhors the innovator. The more they move him, the better the Armenian people understand their songs.

On the other hand, there is the modern composer who is familiar with the beauties and the superiority of international music and his national vanity is hurt as he sees the lack of a correspondingly high level tribal music to keep pace with the others. As the true offspring of his people, he cannot help but contemplate the possibilities of exploring the Armenian musical storehouse and to raise the Armenian music to a higher pedestal.

Under the circumstances, the supreme concern of the Armenian composer of today is nothing else but to make an effort to raise the Armenian popular song to the stature and the excellence of recognized world music.

How can this be accomplished? It can be accomplished only through the implementation of the total manifestation, the

epiphany, if you please, of the Armenian folklore.

Is not this total revelation, or the manifestation of the Armenian folklore accomplished when it is sung in the popular form? it will be asked. Of course it will, but only in a limited sense. We must realize how many hitherto unexplored yet modern beauties lie hidden in each Armenian popular song, dormant potentialities pregnant with all kinds of explosive possibilities which await the Armenian chorus which alone can give vent to their flight, to bring to light new beauties, and to emancipate the Armenian composer from his captivity.

This explosive release of the Armenian popular songs in its musical continuity has a technical word. To elevate itself to the heights of recognized world music, the Armenian music needs development of motifs, — motives which compass three view points: The melodic, the rhythmic, and the harmonic.

And the man who can accomplish this is the Armenian composer who, like the proverbial knight in shining armour, comes to awaken the Armenian popular song from its centuries-old slumber and leads it into a newer and a more resplendent life.

This tendency toward the beautiful, this perpetual urge for the higher and the nobler, this aspiration to constant improvement is innate in man, including the Armenian. It is the natural urge to see the Armenian bring his share to the whole of mankind. Mankind is but another manifestation of the cooperation of the nations, materially and morally. Men fight among themselves quite naturally, and yet, in the final end, their sole instinctive aim is the improvement of the whole. If this were not the case, from the time when men lived in caves to the present, mankind would have been destroyed by now, whereas, on the contrary, man has survived to this day and is much better off today.

This synthesis of the ancient Greek, the French, the English and the German thought has become the greatest boon of mankind, nurturing their souls and motivating all their actions. The national urge in the Armenian compels him to bring in his share of the values and the toil in this common treasury. There is no reason why they should not speak the highly cultured

musical language which the other nations speak, to speak to them words which only the Armenian can impart, because they come from his ancestral, tribal heart, and because they are the messengers of their racial virtues.

Only in this manner can the Armenians bring their share of the contributions to the culture of mankind.

## MEDITATION

*I stood one eve on gilded  
shore and drank the gleaming  
froth of waves  
with hungry eyes  
of one who long had stranger  
been to God. The wind carressed  
my brow.  
with thousand sighs.*

*And gently as the touch of  
drops of dew upon the waking rose,  
my heart entwined  
itself round slender sheaf of  
muted gold from yonder moon.  
Death's call  
'twas then declined.*

*Horizoned 'fore my eyes was  
sheet of endless sea. But  
I was wise  
enough to know  
that all of strange and wondrous  
world was hid behind that wall,  
to wait  
dawn's birthful glow.*

*As easy would it be to  
cause the pulse of life to  
cease within  
my breast as could  
I staunch the flood of joy I  
felt. Of world beyond, I caught  
I understood!*

PATRICIA T. KOJOIAN

# NO TIME TO ARGUE

Second prize winning short story in a literary  
contest conducted by the Armenian Students  
Association of America, 1953.

ANITA KHANZADIAN

It was a wet night, and chilly. A cold biting wind wailed and moaned over the house-tops and its icy fingers tore relentlessly at the branches of the trees — the bleak, whipping wind that typifies the month of March. It was winter's dramatic, angry exit, the precursor of spring. But spring isn't a pretty sight in the slum. Spring was sloppy on Chestnut Street, with the melting snow sinking into the thawing earth and forming mud. Rubbish concealed under the blanket of winter, revealed itself with the disappearing snow.

The large brick apartment house standing on the corner, appeared cold and forbidding, silhouetted against the black sky that resounded with the moaning wind. A lamp cast an eerie light on the lopsided, paint-chipped door of a basement apartment. On the door, two signs hung haphazardly; one was a poorly lettered piece of wood that spelled "OFFICE", and the other, "FURNISHED APARTMENTS", printed in fancy letters, in the indecorously ornate style that disappeared with the Bunny Hug and racoon coats. The stairs of the four units of the apartment house, were crooked and shaky from use, and abuse. The night and the dissembling glare of the street lamp made it difficult to discern the faded and falling bricks, and the sagging cornice.

Across the street, a potpourri of objects from jewelry to novelty can-openers, cluttered the grimy window of a pawn shop.

Amidst the rubble, a lovely cameo brooch glowed in its warm beauty through the dust and surrounding trash. In the store, was every conceivable kind of junk that could be found in the way of furniture. An eye-catching television set and a small frigidaire looked foreign in this scene of deteriorated timber. Someone must have wanted to leave in a hurry.

On the corner diagonally opposite from the furnished rooms, was the central hub, where the larger part of humanity in the vicinity, congregated on Friday nights (and, indeed, many other nights too) — the neighborhood bar, ironically called, "The Paradise." In the window, "The Paradise" glittered and glowed in red neon lights. The mob of people at the bar and surrounding tables, and the blare of the juke-box, attested that perhaps this establishment did have a remote claim to paradise. The chilly breath of the air outside, and close, oppressing heat inside had caused moisture to gather on the windows, as though they were perspiring from the energetic pursuits of the patrons. Viewing it from the furnished apartments across the street, "The Paradise" vaguely resembled a Turkish Bath, only the bathers weren't using hot water for steam.

A grotesque figure of a man, clutching a couple of bottles, staggered out the door. He tripped and fell with a lurch on the step. Slowly and with much effort he picked himself up, and grasped the two bottles,

which by the grace of Providence he had managed to keep from breaking. A ridiculous-looking hat perched ludicrously on his head. The rim slanted over his eyes and ears, as though the din in "paradise" had wilted it. The baggy trousers that draped over his worn shoes, the torn jacket and pathetic hat made him look like a comic-strip character come to life. He began cursing outloud, and in his inebriated state he shouted, "Damn stepl I'll sue this place. . ." And he shook his fist threateningly at "Paradise." He waddled about helplessly for a moment and started to think outloud. "Gotta see Joe. I'll take these over to him. Poor Joe, can't come over here tonight. Missed him . . . this'll make him feel good! Yeh . . . We'll have another party by ourselves!" He forgot about his plans to sue the saloon, and he grinned happily as this pleasant thought occurred to him. So, he scuffed his way across the street to the brick building, and went, bearing gifts, to pay a visit to Joe.

Behind the lop-sided door with the two signs, Mrs. Mary Murphy, the caretaker and rent-collector of the Chestnut Street apartment, sat at the breakfast table finishing the accounts for the week's rents. Her small three rooms were the "office." It was Saturday morning, and the neighborhood children were out on the side-walk, playing noisily, celebrating their freedom from school for a day. She shook her head irritably from the rumpus outside. Mrs. Mosher, the land-lady, would be in any minute for the rent. Well, she was glad she didn't have to worry about paying the bills for this pile of brick. Anyway, she got her rent free, and that's all she'd bother worrying about. Mickey, her cat, purred lazily as he rolled about on his cushion under the table. Mickey was one of those fortunate animals of doubtful pedigree, who had luckily come into the possession of someone who liked animals more than people. He was fat and

furry from too much food and an abundance of affection. Mary had never had any children and she was glad; at least that's what she said. Cats were much cleaner, and easier to take care of. Besides, they didn't talk back. Having an extremely nervous and sometimes nasty disposition, she became thoroughly annoyed with the exuberant shouts of the children playing cops and robbers outdoors. A Saturday morning ritual with her, she stomped out the door and hollered, "Now go someplace else and raise cane. Can't a body have any peace around here? Now git . . . there're playgrounds for the likes of you. Go on over there and run around like you was crazy!" The kids, accustomed to this outburst, laughed insolently and went on playing. She slammed the door angrily. Mickey was playing with his rubber mouse. Immediately, the sharp lines of her face softened, and her eyes glistened, and she tip-toed to him and picked him up and lavished upon him loving caresses. "You're such a good boy . . . yesssss, you're mommy's precious darling. Do you love her? Yessss," she drawled and set him on his royal cushion under the table.

There was a knock at the door and Mrs. Mosher walked in. She was a neat, tidy woman of about forty and if there were any cares behind her cheerful face, her dancing dark eyes didn't show it. She was a widow, and her husband had willed her the building, an enormous mortgage and a stack of unpaid bills. "Good-morning, Mary. Well, how was the collection this week? It better be more than last week, or I'll really be in the red. I have a new plumbing bill due, and I still have to make the payments for repairing the oil-burner. Of all times, for that silly thing to explode!" They sat at the table and stared at the figures.

"It's about the same, Mrs. Mosher. I threw out a couple of tenants like you told



me to when they didn't pay up and were three weeks behind. But the new ones are the same. Trash, that's what, trash. They all seem to think they're supposed to pay their rent at that "Paradise" place across the street. You ought to go over there and claim your money!" Mickey meowed and Mary leaned under the table to see what was ailing him. Mrs. Mosher looked up from her ledger, and in an annoyed and puzzled voice.

"Mary, who is Hess? He's behind five weeks!"

"Oh, Joe . . . he's that character that goes on a week's drinking spree. He usually catches up with his rent after he sobers up, but he's never been this far behind. I guess the funeral set him behind."

"What funeral?"

"Forgot to tell you. His woman died two weeks ago. He's been on a binge ever since. I gave him a notice, but couldn't get him out of that room. He won't budge. Mrs. Mosher, you should see that place! It stinks, oh, how it stinks! He sold the TV set and refrigerator for booze." She widened her eyes and glared like a leering nemesis and related in shocked, aspirant tones, "You know, they wasn't even married! They were just livin' together . . . in Sin!"

"What sort of woman was she?" Mrs. Mosher asked with no reaction to this profound revelation. Her eyes were still glued to the ledger. To Mary Murphy there were only two kind of women, good and bad. Mrs. Mosher's blandness surprised Mary Murphy into forgetting about being righteously indignant, and she answered.

"Well, she was all right I guess, considerin' the kind of woman she was. At least she didn't get drunk and bother the other tenants, like so many of 'em do. Come to think of it, she sort of kept Joe on the wagon most of the time. But she was stuck-up . . . wouldn't talk to nobody . . . had some airs about her, like she thought she

was better than the rest of us. The nerve, her bein' so uppity, livin', the way she was, with that man unlawfully . . . for five years too! Can you beat it?"

Mrs. Mosher frowned disturbedly as she put the rent money in her wallet. "Well, I'll see what I can do. If he doesn't pay up, he'll have to leave. And if I have difficulty ousting him, I'll just have to call in the police. He hasn't been out of there for two weeks?"

"Humph, I don't think he's moved out of that chair for two weeks. Somebody's been bringin' him booze everyday . . . because he ain't stopped drinkin', that's for sure."

"I think I'll go up and see if I can't talk to him," she said as she was leaving.

"Don't think he can remember how, the condition he's in!" Mrs. Murphy yelled out the door.

The cat came to the door rubbed against her leg, purring contentedly. "Ya hungry, Mickey darlin'? Come on, mommy's got a nice goody for your lunch. How would you like some tuna fish?"

Mrs. Mosher slowly opened the door to Joe's apartment, and stood in the doorway. Before she saw anything, the fetid odor of stale alcohol and urine nauseatingly filled her nostrils. Then she saw him. He was sitting in the worn armchair, his filthy undershirt torn, his beltless pants gathered around his hips. His head was drooped over his chest. One arm lay lifelessly on the arm of the chair and the other held an empty glass. He was quivering, ever so slightly. On the surrounding floor were scattered bottles — empty and half-empty — of every imaginable brand of alcoholic beverage. The stench was overpowering. The bed was bare, the mattress battered, faded and filthy. Everything in the room seemed to exude a nauseating stink. He slowly lifted his pallid face, and gave her a glassy stare with his eyes, blood-shot

from a combination of alcohol and no sleep. For a full minute he said nothing, nor did she. Then he spoke in a listless, tired, uninterested voice. "What do you want?" She did not answer. A glimmer of curiosity crept into his fatigued face. "Well, who are you?" She composed herself and answered.

"I'm Mrs. Mosher, your landlady . . . You're sick, Mr. Hess."

"My name's Joe, everybody calls me Joe. Yeh, I know I'm sick, but not as sick as *she* was. Goddam doctors didn't know a thing, made a pincushion of her with their damn injections — and she died a little more each day. . ."

"I know you're grief-stricken, Joe. But you ought to try to get a hold of yourself. You know, she wouldn't have wanted you to carry on like this."

With a sudden outburst, his whole frame shaking from the stinging pain and his face with tears, he cried out: "I don't want to live. I can't go on without her. Oh, she suffered, how she suffered, Mrs. Mosher. And all I could do was watch her suffer. Why? Why? Martha was such a good woman!"

"I know, Joe."

"And she never complained. Not once did she complain. Always thinking about me. She was so good to me, and kind. Martha was all I had. What's the use. I don't want to live."

"You're sick, Joe. You need a doctor. Shall I get you a doctor?"

"Yes, Mrs. Mosher, I need a doctor." He made an effort to get up but his limbs would not move.

"Have you eaten anything, Joe?"

"Haven't touched the stuff, since Martha . . ." and he covered his face with his hands and wept with no restraint.

"I'll get you help," she whispered, partly to Joe and partly to herself, and she hurried out of the foul-smelling room.

As she rushed down the stairs, she bumped into the grotesque little man with the

hat that came over his eyes. She hurried past him, while he swore softly under his breath, and lovingly clutched a bottle of wine to his breast.

She stopped at the phone in the corridor, just inside the main entrance.

"Now, who should I call? I'll get in touch with a hospital, and say it's an emergency. Something has to be done!" she thought, as she frantically searched for some change in her bag.

She called the hospital. She called three of them, but she received the same reply from each, after she told of the condition the man was in, and the circumstances involved. No, they were sorry, but they could not possibly admit anyone into the hospital without someone signing for the patient, assuming full financial responsibility.

"But it's an emergency," she pleaded. "I don't think he'll live long. He needs care, and he needs it immediately. Delay may mean death."

"Then take it to a public agency, to the Welfare. It's their job!"

So she went to the Welfare. A pleasant, young, efficient-looking secretary sat at the desk, typing. Mrs. Mosher went up to the desk, nervously fiddling with her gloves. The secretary looked up with a cheery, well-practiced smile. There was just a touch of contemptuousness in her eyes, that was well-concealed behind long, dark lashes. Her wholesome face reflected the precision and smugness afforded by an ideal and possibly boring home and family. "What can I do for you?"

Mrs. Mosher began, speaking very rapidly now, far from repetition of the incident, she could relate it almost without thinking. "I want to open a case, now. It's urgent! A man is dying, and he must be sent to a hospital at once. He is completely neglected. He has no friends, no family." The

secretary answered in her business-like tone.

"Mr. Willoughby handles new cases, and he has already left for the day. It's Saturday, and we close early. Come in Monday and we'll take care of you." And she went back to her typing, dismissing the distraught woman standing before her. Not one to be so easily brushed-off, Mrs. Mosher replied.

"But Monday may be too late! Don't you understand! He may die from lack of attention. Can't you authorize his going to a hospital, and take care of the red tape later? This is an emergency. Please, call this Mr. Willoughby and explain it to him somehow. . ."

Getting a bit uncomfortable, but still adamant in her stand, the secretary answered coolly, "Sorry, but he's out-of-town for the week-end."

"But can't you just call up a hospital, or send a doctor to this man? Can't there be an exception this time?" Becoming increasingly annoyed, the typist typed with increasing pace, the sound of the keys filling the quiet room, and she retorted, "Sorry, regulations."

Mrs. Mosher stood rigidly, her face drained of color, her eyes staring at the flashing fingers, as though mesmerised by their nimbleness. She turned slowly and started for the door. She couldn't think. Her head was throbbing with the click-clack of the typewriter keys.

She was at loss as to what step she should take next. Should she wait until Monday and just sit tight? Then the pathetic picture of Joe sitting motionless in the worn chair of the filthy apartment came before her eyes. She could even smell the room. She stopped short on the side-walk, as an idea came to her. "The filth . . . the smell . . . that's it! The Board of Health won't stand for it."

She rushed into a drug-store and head-

ed for a phone-booth. For fifteen minutes she talked rapid-fire into the receiver. Then she crept out of the booth, shoulders sagging, and a deep frown on her forehead. The Board of Health felt that the situation was out of their department, and referred her to the Welfare.

Not knowing what to do at this point, she went back to the furnished rooms to see how Joe was. To all appearance, he hadn't moved at all since she had left him earlier in the day. Perhaps his shoulders slouched more, and his eyes had a foggier look to them, but outwardly at any rate, there didn't seem to be any alarming change in him. He was trembling more noticeably now than before, "Joe," she said, "are you all right?" He nodded in affirmation. "There'll be someone here any minute now, to doctor you up. Don't worry."

She stood in front of the phone, trying to think of someone or some agency to call. Suddenly, she dialed Operator. "Get me the Police." Even if they might not send him to a hospital, at least they may let him stay in a clean cell, sleep in a warm bed, and eat some decent food — and there might possibly be a physician on the premises. "Police?" I want to report a disturbance at my apartment house at 408 Chestnut Street. Yes, I've had so many complaints from the other tenants that I was forced to call you." A police-officer was at 408 Chestnut Street in twenty minutes.

Mrs. Mosher gently opened the door so as not to startle Joe. The policeman, a corpulent, rather authoritative man of about fifty, grimaced disgustedly at the sight of the room and the smell. Joe watched him, fearfully, as the officer surveyed the room. Joe turned to Mrs. Mosher with such a pitiful and imploring look that she felt that it was etching itself on her brain, so she could never forget it, not if she lived for a thousand years. The policeman suddenly stalked out of the apartment and waited for her in

the hallway. As she turned to follow him, she said to Joe: "Don't be frightened Joe . . . he's going to help you."

The policeman shook his head in contempt. "He's got the D. T.'s."

"I know . . . can you arrest him? Or send a doctor? You can see how helpless he is."

"It's his own fault. He's been drinking."

"Sir, this has gone beyond the point of merely arguing whose fault it is. Of course, it's his own fault, but right now he needs help, and needs it desperately." She clenched her fists in her excitement, pressing her arms tightly against her body, to keep from shaking her fist before the law. He was unmoved.

"This is beyond our jurisdiction. Call the Welfare."

"I did, but they can't do anything until Monday, and that'll be too late."

"You'll just have to wait until Monday, then." He glanced blankly at Mrs. Mosher. Since emotion didn't work with this pillar of the law, she tried to use logic.

"Look, can't you arrest him? The tenants are complaining about the smell, and I can't get him out of there. You can arrest him for disturbing the peace, or not paying his rent. At least at the jail, he'll be better off than here all by himself."

"Nope, can't charge him with anything. He hasn't been starting any riots or anything, or fighting . . . he can't even move!" He started down the stairs. Mrs. Mosher followed him down, anxiously talking over his shoulder.

"What are you going to do? Just leave him there to die?"

"Look, lady, don't worry about it. He'll be all right. You don't know how much them human breweries can lap it up. If he hadn't been drinking, maybe something different could have been done. But it's his own fault!" So, he's left with a blissful air of unconcern, whistling, "It's a Great, Wide, Wonderful World."

Mrs. Mosher lay in bed, pondering.

Should she send him to a hospital? But she couldn't afford it. And she hardly knew the man. Her head throbbed monotonously, long after she lay down, nagging her, not letting her for one second forget the pathetic figure with the imploring eyes. She tossed and turned through a night of conscious nightmares. The image of Joe and the ramshackle room kept creeping into her thoughts. Unable to endure it any longer, she cried out-loud, "All right . . . I'll send him to a hospital! I'll worry about expenses later. Only let me forget about it for a while!"

The next morning, Sunday, she left her house to go back to the apartment. She looked tired and worn from her sleepless night, but there was a new light and determination in her face, put there by the strength of her new decision. She felt relaxed for the first time in twenty-four hours.

As she drew near to the furnished rooms, she saw three shiny, black cars lined up in front of the building. She spotted a police wagon, behind the cars. Her face brightened. "It's the police. They've decided to help after all. I knew that cop couldn't be as hard as all that!" And she ran across the street to the apartment.

Mrs. Murphy was on the outer steps, talking busily to three policemen. She was wrapped snugly in a shawl. She cradled Mickey gently in her arms, as she chattered away eagerly. All three policemen wrote furiously, taking down each word like a newfound gem. ". . . And he'd been drinking like that for two weeks. Don't know of any relatives. One of the tenants found him lyin' on the floor this morning. Guess he tried to move and fell down and hit his head. Anyway, he was cold before anyone found him. That's what happens when a man don't lead a Christian life. You know, he had a woman livin' with him . . . eight years . . . and they wasn't even married. . ."

# ARMENIAN LIFE ABROAD

*A digest of recent happenings among the Armenian settlements in diaspora*

## **United States:**

### **Armenian Cultural Exhibit Held at Fresno State College Through Aegis of Local AYF Chapter**

Fresno Armenian Americans and their national cultural background was the theme of a major exhibition which occupied the premises of the exhibition chambers at the Fresno (Calif.) State College Library during the middle weeks of January. The exhibit, which specifically portrayed the culture and history of Armenia through the centuries, was under the sponsorship of the Fresno "Gevorg Chavoush" Chapter of the Armenian Youth Federation of America, and was under the direct supervision of two FSC-AYF girls, Rose Jamushian, chapter president, and Vartiter Kotcholosian.

Among articles shown was an ancient Armenian *tarr* which, according to an inscription on the instrument itself, dated back to 1235. This instrument was obviously handed down from minstrel to minstrel, and bore the names (inlaid in mother of pearl) Abgar, Artash and Stepan. Two skillfully carved wooden plaques showed Vardan, Keri and Hamazasp, heroes of the Armenian revolution. A housedress dated back over 100 years, as did a headpiece fringed with silk-threads. There were many illustrated books, together with reproductions of famed art works by the famous Armenian marine painter Aivazovsky. One large sheet offered colored pictures of Nazariantz, Abovian, Alishan and Raffi,

the early Armenian writers who inspired the resurgence of patriotic sentiment among Armenians. Another case showed the ancient architectural forms of great Armenians cathedrals and their interior ornamentation. A large map backgrounded the entire exhibition. Local newspapers gave over a good deal of space to the publication of the unique exhibition, and the AYF was roundly congratulated for its work.

★ ★ ★

### **New Radio Program in New York Metropolitan area**

Residents of metropolitan New York were introduced to a new and engaging Armenian radio program called "Armenian Echoes" on Saturday, February 6th. The weekly, half hour broadcast is carried from 1:30 to 2 P.M. over station WEVD.

The new program promises to introduce a fresh approach to the field of Armenian audio communication. Conducted in both the Armenian and English languages, "Armenian Echoes" is aimed at appealing to the widest possible Armenian audience. Besides having the usual staple of fine recorded music, the program offers many novel features. These include "live" music by talented Armenians, original radio dramas, studio interviews with prominent individuals, and news on Armenian happenings throughout the world, including local community news.

★ ★ ★

### **Death of Thomas Charshafjian, First Editor of the Hairenik**

Fresno Armenian leaders announced on



January 1 that Thomas Charshafjian, first editor of the Hairenik Armenian-language newspaper, now the *Hairenik Daily*, passed away that day in Fresno after a long illness. Charshafjian served as editor of the fledgling Hairenik from its foundation, May 1, 1899, to March 30, 1900, when Arshak Vramian arrived here in America as the ARF representative and editor of the Hairenik.

## Syria:

### M. P. Eblighatian of Syria Grants an Interview

A reporter of an Armenian newspaper in Aleppo recently interviewed Judge Krikor Eblighatian, whose recent land-slide election to the Parliament of the Republic of Syria was one of the features of nationwide voting held in this country.

Judge Eblighatian told the reporter that he was born in 1924 and received his early education in the Armenian schools of Aleppo. He was later graduated from the French College at Beirut, in neighboring Lebanon, in 1948, and immediately assumed judgeship duties in Latakia, Kessab and Aleppo, during which time he made the acquaintance of numbers of prominent Syrian governmental officials. The member of parliament said that he had found that the Syrian leaders held excellent opinions of the Armenian community of the country. Many of these leaders had expressed their satisfaction at the manner in which the Armenians comported themselves during the recent elections, said the Judge.

The reporter also learned that Judge Eblighatian had been elected vice-president of the Committee on Education of Parliament. In this connection, he said that he was especially interested in seeing that the Armenian schools in Aleppo, in com-

mon with all other community schools, would enjoy all necessary privileges in order to aid them in their educational mission.

## Lebanon:

### Election of Catholicos of Cilicia Runs into New Delays

The unconstitutional delay attending the election of a new Catholicos of Antelias, traditionally known as the Catholicos of Sis, to fill the vacancy occasioned by the death of the last incumbent, Catholicos Garegin, some time ago, still continues. The *locum tenens*, Archbishop Khat, whose duty it is under the Sis Constitution to summon an electoral convention following the decease of the Catholicos, shows no signs whatsoever of fulfilling his responsibilities in this matter. Meanwhile, world Armenians wait for action, their eyes focused on developments in Lebanon. There are growing indications that the problem of electing a new Catholicos of Antelias becomes knottier every day. Erivan, and by extension of course, the Kremlin, is manifesting in a number of ways that it is mightily concerned as to how the elections would go if held. Reports have come out of Lebanon telling of the increased activities of Soviet agents and pro-Soviet elements. These people are attempting to create an atmosphere favorable to the election of a Catholicos who will be friendly to the Soviet, and will hold close political ties with the Catholicos of All Armenians in Etchmiadzin, the captive Catholicos of the Soviet.

## Great Britain:

### London Armenians hold Function to Benefit School

November 28 was a notable day in the recent story of the Armenian community of

London. More than 400 British Armenians turned out to support a function sponsored by the Ladies' Auxiliary of the Armenian Community Union, the proceeds of which went to the Educational Fund of the Armenian Pro-School Association of Paris, which maintains educational facilities for French Armenian young people.

Local observers consider the large turn out at least one of the largest in recent times.

Heading the formal program was principal speaker Mrs. Seza, the editor of the Beirut publication "Yeridasart Haiouhi," who has been visiting in London over the past few weeks accompanied by her physician husband. Also speaking was Dr. Arshak Safrastian. It was later announced from the stage that 250 British pounds sterling would be given the Paris Armenian educational group.

The audience heard Manoog Parikian, violinist, and Miss Olive Zorian, pianist. Mrs. Gorgodian recited, and Mrs. Bauldy offered solo vocal numbers. One of the features of the afternoon was the dancing of a number of Armenian "bahrs" by a group of Armenian youngsters, suitably accoutred in native costume. The youngsters were coached admirably by Mrs. Wimbley, a local Armenian lady. They danced to tunes rendered by pianist Miss Romile Grigorian.

## *Italy:*

### **Milan Armenians Open Community Center Building**

A red-letter day in the history of the Armenian community of Italy took place in Milan, December 5, when local Armenian Italians opened formally their long-needed Community center. Among those present were Bishop Terenig, who recently visited the Catholicos in Soviet Armenia, and the Abbot-General of the Venice Mekhitarist

Community, the Most Rev. S. Oolohojian.

The gathering was addressed in both Armenian and Italian by Dr. Manoog Khanbegian, the chairman of the Armenian Community Center Committee, Dr. Ervand Arzoomanian, chairman of the Italian Armenian Committee, Mrs. Nevarte A. Dil-sizian, secretary of the Italian Armenian Women's Federation, Mr. Hagob Alexanian, vice-chairman of the Church Trustee Board, and Dr. Aramais Serabian, chairman of the Italian Armenian Cultural Association.

All joined voices in expressing confident hope that the new Center would serve the cause of Armenian culture and learning.

★ ★ ★

### **A Call is Made to Renovate and Reappoint the Raphaelian School**

One of the centers of Armenian learning abroad, the 120 year-old Raphaelian School in Venice, Italy, is sorely in need of renovation and reappointments, and recently a call was made by the school authorities for funds needed for the necessary changes and restorations on the historic place of learning. The call was first directed at former students of the Raphaelian School now prospering in Milan. Plans are under way to contact all Raphaelian graduates and friends wherever they may be dwelling in the four corners of the earth.

## *Turkey:*

### **Mark One Hundreth Anniversary of Translation of the Holy Bible into the Modern Armenian**

The one-hundreth anniversary of the translation of the Holy Bible into the modern Armenian language (ashkharapar) was marked recently at a special function held at the Bible House in Istanbul, Turkey. As is known, the modern Armenian translation of the Bible was executed under the aegis of the Protestant missionaries in

Turkey. The work was completed in 1853. At that time, efforts were being made to put a solid literary footing to the modern Armenian language. Playing a large role in the rendering of the first Armenian "ashkharapar" Bible were such missionaries and Armenian Protestants as M. E. Riggs, Andrias Papazian, Avetis Der Sahakian, and Senekerim Minassian, all of whom worked together closely to finish the work.

★ ★ ★

### **Raise New Hopes for a General Council Meeting**

Istanbul Armenian circles of late have been buzzing with new rumors that there is a likelihood that an Armenian General Church Council meeting will soon be held. It is reported that the government in Ankara has been petitioned for permission to hold such a representative Armenian meeting. There is a further report that the authorities have agreed to such a session, and that elections of diocesan representatives will soon commence. It is known that a Turkish governmental representative from Ankara recently arrived in Istanbul and was closetted with Patriarch Karekin for about a half-hour. The Patriarchate has refused to reveal the nature of the interview, but it is believed by responsible circles that the subject discussed was the proposed Church meeting.

### **France:**

#### **General Torkom Passes Away in Paris, France**

General Torkom, a well-known figure on the Armenian scene, recently passed away in Paris. He is especially remembered for his military exploits in support of the Armenian freedom struggle in the World War I period. During this period, Gen. Torkom did yeoman service to the Greek cause as well. A graduate of the French military college at St. Cyr, he served with distinc-

tion in the Balkan wars of 1912-13, and published a number of works defending the Armenian Cause. Gen. Torkom was decorated by the Bulgar, Russian, and Greek governments.

### **Indonesia:**

#### **Report Says 400 Armenians Reside in Indonesian Republic**

Forty people of Armenian persuasion dwell in the capital city of the Indonesian Republic, Jakarta. Reports emanating from the city say that these Armenians have their own national organization which supervises Armenian activities.

The Armenian Church of St. John here was founded in 1854 through the generosity of Mrs. Khatatoun and Miss Takhouhi. The Armenian community maintains funds for youth training and orphans.

At Soerabaya, also in Indonesia, there are an additional number of 250 Armenians whose community life centers around their St. Kevork Church, established in 1928. The Abgarian Hall abutts the Church building, and two schoolrooms are maintained.

Soerabaya Armenians also boast of their "Cultural Union" as well as their "Theatrical Comany," both of which organizations are active in the social and educational field. There is also a "Tourian Library" and guest room. Young people of the community are active in an "Athletic Association" which did particularly good work during 1952.

Reports also have it that there are other Armenians living on Macassar Island, while still others are frequently met with in other parts of the Republic. Estimates are made that there are about 400 Armenians in all in Indonesia. Authorities say that all the Armenians here are arrivals from Iran, or else are descendants of immigrants from the old Armenian community of New Julfa, in Iran.

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CLASSIC BOOKS IN SERIAL FORM

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# GEVORG MARZPETOUNI

*A Historical Novel*

By MOURATZAN

Translated from the Armenian

## THE STORY THUS FAR

The time is the first quarter of the 10th century when Armenia is in conflict with the Arab invader. Ashot the Iron, the Armenian King, has liberated his capital of Dowin and is busy clearing the rest of the country from the invader. Queen Sahakanoush, now in the security of the Castle of Garni, is going through a terrific emotional strain on account of the King's strange attitude. Her foster mother and Governess, old Seda, finally reveals to the Queen that which has been a mystery to her for a long time. The King has resumed his love affair with his old flame, Princess Aspram, the wife of Tzlik Amram whom the King has appointed Governor of Outik. To avenge the honor of his daughter, Prince Sevada has rebelled against the King who punishes him and his son by blinding them in both eyes. Meanwhile the King's treachery has provoked the enmity of Tzlik Amram who by this time is in league with the Arab invaders and harrasses the King. The princes of the land, on the other hand, refuse to rally around their king. Under these circumstances, Prince Marzpetouni, a true patriot, tries to reconcile the opposing forces and succeeds in winning over Prince Sevada. Meanwhile, Tzlik Amram traps and captures the King's army, although the King succeeds in making his escape. The Arab Emir Nusr, the ally of Amram, massacres the inmates of the Monastery of Ayrivank where the Armenian Catholicos had taken refuge. The Catholicos, however, already has made his escape to the Castle of Garni where he has a consultation with the Queen, but when he realizes that Garni is not safe he departs for Sevan. Although the Queen is aware of the King's infidelity, she decides to stand by him for the sake of the preservation of the kingdom.

## CHAPTER IV

## The Hero's Decision

A few days had passed since the return of Gevorg Marzpetouni and Sepouh Vahram to the Castle of Garni. Their mission to rally the princes around the King had been fruitless. Neither the King's brother Abbas, nor Ashot the Stratelat, nor Gagig Artzrouni had wanted to join the union. The Lords of Aghtzni and Mok had likewise been neutral.

What to do now? It was this question which preoccupied the thoughts of Prince Marzpetouni when news came that Beshir had captured the Castle of Burakan and put the inmates to the sword. The news profoundly distressed the Prince. "Then the devastation already has started and we were unable to prevent it," he sighed deeply. He kept pacing the floor of his lonely seclusion in the castle, sad and wrapped in his thoughts. He recalled his labor of months, his indefatigable efforts to unite the disrupted, broken forces to save the country from the foreign yoke and to prevent the destruction of the throne. And, remembering his failure, he was on the verge of despair.

Up until now such a sentiment had been alien to Prince Marzpetouni. He had been a firm believer in Christ's saying that "he who seeks shall find; he who knocks, it shall be opened to him." And now he had sought but found nothing; he had knocked but no one had opened the door.

"It follows it is God's will that this nation should perish and its memory should be effaced from the face of the earth," he thought bitterly. "Yes, that's the reason why he has hardened the princes' hearts, has misled the King, and has dismayed the Queen. Let us leave things to their fate, go away, crawl into some corner and watch how God will punish this hapless and doomed people."

The Prince was in the midst of these meditations when the Sepouh came in with some fresh news.

"A soldier returning from Siunik has brought more bad news," the Sepouh announced.

"It would be strange indeed if he brought some glad news because we are not expecting it," the Prince replied with a sad smile. "What news does he bring?"

"The King has left Kakhavaberd and is now in Sevan."

"In Sevan?" the Prince asked surprised.

"Yes, in Sevan. He has squatted there and vows he will not budge."

"And the Queen?"

"She is with the King."

The Prince who until then was seated in his chair stood up and started to pace the floor. He did not speak a word but his face was convulsing with emotion. Finally he stopped, and fixing his eyes on the Sepouh he asked:

"Vahram, what do you think we should do now?"

The Sepouh shrugged his shoulders.

"What do you think must be done? Answer me," the Prince repeated.

"If we had troops; if only a few of the princes would join us."

"We have no troops and the princes will not join us. We already know that. What else do you know? Tell me that."

"What else can I say? We are alone. You cannot clap hands with one hand. One flower will not bring the spring."

The Prince took a step forward, put his hand on the hilt of his sword, and raising his head, he looked proudly at the Sepouh. "Can't you say anything more?" he asked.

"Nothing more," the Sepouh replied.

"And I say you can clap with one hand



and one flower will bring the spring."

The Sepouh smiled. "It is impossible, Lord Marzpetouni."

"Nothing is impossible when there is a will and the devotion to work."

"We have done everything and yet we gained nothing."

"The two of us together, yes, we did everything in our power. But I myself have not done everything. I have many debts to pay yet."

"What else is there left for you to do?"

"I will tell you about that tomorrow, and publicly, in front of the garrison and the fugitive nobles."

Knowing the Prince's tenacity, the Sepouh pressed no further and waited anxiously for tomorrow's statement.

The next morning, at the Prince's command, all the garrison of Garni and their commanders were assembled in front of the Canopy of Tiridates, including the clergy and the entire population of Garni. There were also the princes' families and the young people. In short, the whole of Garni was thronged in the square, while the inmates of the Castle were in the Canopy.

When all had taken their places, the Prince, now clad in his resplendent military armour, ascended the top of the stairs of the Canopy, and standing there, he spoke in a proud ringing voice:

"Noble Milords and Miladies, soldiers, and beloved people. It is now a few months since the King left Vostan. He left here to vanquish the rebellious princes, but because he failed, he withdrew to Kakhavaberd waiting for his princes. None of them budged from his place, none of them remembered his King. It seemed to me that if one of us volunteered the role of mediator to exhort the princes, surely they would have rallied to their King. So, Sepouh Vahram and I volunteered this mission. We traveled a long way, the whole of

Shirak, Aghtznis, Vaspourakan and the land of Mok. We called on all the princes, begging them, importuning them to unite and defend the King and the country; but none of them listened to us; none of them accepted our proposition. Each prince, with his troops and supplies is strongly entrenched in an impregnable castle; each one feels secure in his place. No one gives any thought to the defenseless people, the vacant throne, and the fugitive King. Even the Catholicos thinks only of his safety and runs away from the castle to castle. He no longer cares about the public welfare. The result of all this is that the Emir has occupied the capital and Beshir has been ravaging Ayrivank and Burakan, has been massacring the people and the clergy, and is likely to extend the range of his devastations.

"Seeing all this, the King is still more discouraged and retires from Kakhavaberd to Sevan. The same hero who once was the terror of the enemy, who never knuckled under any power, who never ran away from any danger has now sought refuge in the cloisters of the clergy because he no longer relies on his princes. Shame on us, Armenians, shame, O fellow soldiers!"

"What shall we do? What can we do?" spoke a few from the audience.

"What can you do? That's a good question. Listen, and I will tell you. Our present situation is known to you all. The fatherland, the royal throne and the throne of the Catholicos are in jeopardy; you know that too. You also know that I appealed to the princes in behalf of all of you, I begged them, I importuned them, but none of them would hear me. What is your verdict about these men? Shall we condemn them?"

"Yes, yes, we condemn them," they chorused.

"Very good. Now I appeal to you, O soldiers and people of Garni. I offer you

the same proposition which our princes rejected. This is my last debt to be paid. Listen to me. Garni is impregnable, as long as our supplies last the enemy can never harm us unless some traitor betrays us. Let us leave one hundred soldiers to guard Garni. That much will be enough for Commander Mushegh. The remainder of the troops and their commanders can join me and tomorrow we shall take the field. I will divide you into companies, to ravage the royal provinces, we shall meet them separately and decimate them. Before one month has passed we shall have a sizeable army. The first victory will be succeeded by the second, and the third, until thousands of soldiers will rally to our banners. And our victories will inspire the King with fresh hope, he will again return to his throne, will march at the head of his soldiers, and the princes will join him. We can accomplish all this, O people of Garni. Onward then! Let us to work."

The Prince stopped and swept the audience with his eyes to see who would respond to his words. His audience, however, remained silent and motionless. Only two persons fixed their fiery gaze on the Prince, astonished by the abysmal silence wishing to fly to his side, as it were. One of these was young prince Kor who was standing beside the captains; and the other was Shahandoukht, standing with the ladies of the court.

But it was not these two Prince Gevorg was looking for. He was waiting to hear from the old soldiers and their commanders. But when he saw that they were silent and even tried to avoid his gaze, he continued in a mild voice:

"I had not expected that here in Garni, too, I would meet cowards. Is there not one hundred among you who want to prove that they are the sons of braves?"

"Lord Prince, what can one hundred do? Let him who can muster one thousand take

the field and we all will join him," a young captain spoke up.

"He who seeks support in numbers proves that he too is a coward," the Prince barked. "No soldier, if he is a real soldier, will wait for his companion when the fatherland is in danger. He who has the strength to fight, who can strike a blow at the enemy, who can drive an arrow at his breast, but who hides himself under the protection of the walls or shrinks from the fight is a traitor. Do you want to live? Do you want to enjoy life? Good and well. Why then do you carry arms? Why do you dishonor the sword? Throw your weapons aside, pick up the cane of the beggar and go stand in front of the doors of the Amiras. They might pity you and adopt you as their slaves."

The soldiers and their commanders were astonished at these insulting words while the princely heirs scarcely could believe their ears. Until then no one had heard such offensive words from the lips of the Prince. What could have happened? Why was he excited so much? They did not know. Many of them began to exchange glances, some even tried to come forward and express their displeasure, but the Prince's withering look nailed them to their places. He paused a moment, then turning to Sepouh Vahram he thundered: "Lord Sepouh, yesterday you told me that one cannot clap with one hand, nor one flower will bring the spring. These men who should have been monks but who by some error have become soldiers have confirmed your words. I want to prove to you now that you are all wrong."

Saying it, the Prince unsheathed his sword, and stepping forward, shouted:

"Behold, I shall go against the Arabs all by myself. Who is the brave among you who will dare join me? Let him come forward."

"I will join you, father," the young prince

Khor shouted, and drawing his sword came forward.

"My valiant son," murmured the Prince proudly, and embracing his son kissed him.

"You can count on me too, Lord Marzpetouni," seconded Sepouh Vahram.

"The noble Sepouh is worth a regiment," the Prince replied, extending to him his hand.

"Count me in too, my Lord," Yeznik humbly stepped forward.

"And we too," the four guards of Sepouh Vahram.

A few more volunteers from the freemen of Garni and Basen raised the number to nineteen. Finally Mushegh, the commander of the Castle, took off his helmet and stepping forward addressed the Prince:

"Lord Prince, I have been waiting out of deference for those who are more worthy than I. Now I see that the number of the braves is completed. Accept me. I pray you, as your last servant to join this brave band which shall fight under your banner."

"Rise to your feet, my brave and loyal Mushegh, give me your hand. Your support is precious to me because you are seasoned in battles. As long as the likes of you join our ranks God will help us to vanquish the enemies of our fatherland."

The number of the braves was now twenty. "You are enough for me, with you I can vanquish thousands," the Prince said to his volunteers, and turning to Sepouh he said, "Now let us go take the oath."

"You are going the wrong way, my Lord. The Church is this way," Sepouh observed.

"No, the altar of our oath is this way," the Prince replied as he approached the tomb of Mashtotz which reposed in the east corner of the Canopy. When they were assembled the Prince pronounced the oath:

"My beloved braves. By right this oath should have been administered by the Patriarch of the Armenians. He should have

been the one to bless our swords were he not a wanderer and a fugitive for fear of his life. But he was not loyal to his calling. He was no loyal shepherd of his flock. Therefore we are not his fold. Here rest the relics of the most virtuous and devoted shepherd of them all. Place your swords on this sacred shrine and swear that you shall be faithful to your oath to fight and to die for the salvation of the fatherland. May Saint Mashtotz bless your swords and may his holy relics be a witness to your oath."

The soldiers unsheathed their swords and placing them on the holy tomb swore eternal loyalty to the Prince, the King and the Fatherland.

When the ceremony of the oath was over the Prince stepped forward and addressed the soldiers in following words:

"My beloved braves, I have heard your oath, and now you shall hear mine. I swear before you, I swear in the name of the Eternal, I swear by the sun of the fatherland and this holy grave that I shall never return to the bosom of my family until I have chased the last Arab from the borders of our land. May God destroy me, may the Christian call me a Judas, and the patriot call me a Vasak if I ever forswear my oath. I will prove that the fatherland's strength does not reside in the fortresses nor the princes' power. I will prove that twenty devoted volunteers who sacrifice their lives are worth more than an army of twenty thousand. Onward then! Forward! May the God of the Armenians be our helper, and the Cross of the Armenian our stay."

The Prince decided that before his company took the field they should first meet the King and receive his blessing. Accordingly, that same evening, armed and ready, the little band of volunteers left Garni and headed for Sevan where the King was in hiding.

## CHAPTER V

## The Heaviest Weight of All

The brilliant disk of the moon emerged from behind Aytzemnasar and bathed the somber sea of Kelam in a pool of shimmering light. The eastern skirts of the waving fields slowly kindled with a dark, blood red color and the tiny, gentle sinews started to roll a myriad balls of light. The whole of Sevan was wrapped up in profound silence, motion had come to a standstill and the lights were extinguished. Tired from their countless devotionals, the monks of the monastery were deep asleep, cuddled in the dank cells. The chapels and the churches likewise seemed asleep lullabyed by the ripple of the waves which beat against the shores of the little lake.

On a rising hillock to the east of the island where stood the Church of St. Haroutyoun, amid a scattering of moss-clad crosses, a lone tall man was pacing the ground. It was difficult to tell whether he was a layman or a clergyman because he was dressed in a long flowing robe and a monk's hood. Only his tall figure and his proud prance gave indication that the man was a stranger to the monastery.

After pacing back and forth for a long time the stranger came to a stop on the tip of the promontory where the cliffs, rising from the midst of the lake, piled upon one another and forming powerful fortifications protected the island to the east and the south, making it inaccessible not only to rafts and ships but even to the swimmer.

At that moment the moon was slowly making its ascent and the dark red of the lake was gradually being transformed into an iridescent silver, slowly spreading to the remotest shores which were surrounded on one side with green fields and verdant woods. All nature was suffused with the tranquil, mellow moonlight. Seated on the towering ledge, the stranger was watching

the scene so delightful, enchanting and mysterious. It seemed to him at this moment when the whole world was peacefully asleep the evil spirits emerged from their hidden cells, or the good angels descended from heaven to dispense to some good fortune and happiness, while to others, sorrow and affliction. It seemed to him it was just such a mysterious moment that had fated him his chain of misfortunes. Presently, there flashed on the screen of his mind the whole panorama of his past memories, images of his early happiness and the mental tortures which has followed.

"How did I ever fall so low?" suddenly he exclaimed, grasping his forehead, as if trying to repel the dismal thoughts which, like dark clouds, were crowding his mind and rocking his soul. And yet his thoughts would not leave him, the torturing images lingered on. On the contrary, it was the enchanting scenery — the lake with its silvery wavelets, the mountains with their proud peaks, the moon with its soft dim rays which took flight. Even the gentle breeze which caressed the weeds and the flowers of the shore brought him no refreshment, he did not even hear the roar of the surf beating against the rocks at the base of the island, because his soul was not here in Sevan. It had taken wings and was flying far, far away, in distant provinces.

Presently he heard some soft footsteps a few feet away. It seemed some mysterious power emanating from the stranger newcomer shook his soul. He who had heard nothing suddenly woke up and raising his head, saw the woman approaching him, covered in a veil.

"Who is it?" He suddenly recognized the newcomer and flew up from his seat.

"Queen, is it you?" he asked in a gentle voice.

"Yes, my beloved King," the latter murmured.

"Here, all alone, in this hour of the night?"

"I wouldn't say that. Is not King Ashot with me?"

"But how did you come as far as here? Where are your maids?"

"I wanted to come alone here. I wanted to see you by all means. I went to your rooms, your bedchamber but could not find you. Your door keepers told me you come here every night and spend a few hours for your relaxation. I did not know it."

"Oh yes. It's beautiful here at night. But why is it you wanted to see me so urgently- Have you by any chance brought me some news?"

"No, I have no news."

"Then why did you come?"

"I wanted to see you."

"Why?"

"I wanted to talk to you a few moments."

"I don't understand. You see me every hour in the daytime, you can speak to me any moment. Why should you disturb your comfort of the night to come and see me?"

"My comfort and rest? Do you think I have any rest? Do you think I can have any rest?"

"Queen!"

"I have long since lost the hours of my rest."

"In our land no one has any rest these days."

"That's true. But once the enemy is expelled from the land all will recover their rest."

"And you with them."

"Me? How I wish that were true."

"Are you afraid of future attacks? No

danger threatens you even now. Sevan is impregnable and inaccessible."

"The enemy has seized my fortifications long since. My peace and rest are lost forever."

"What are you talking about? Are you opening up the old wounds again?"

"O let me speak to you this once. Let me open my heart to you. Let me weep boldly before you."

"Queen, you are excited. You need rest."

"Permit me, I beg of you, let me be excited and suffer. I can find rest only in my suffering."

"But what has happened? Has someone hurt you anew?"

"A new hurt? Oh no. It is the old hurt which keeps languishing, torturing my heart, and alas, there is no hand, that will apply the salve to my wound. I am forsaken. I am all alone in this world, all alone. Oh, you don't know how heavy this is, how hard it is to be lonely."

Saying it the Queen burst into tears.

"What's this, Queen? You are crying. That's childish. What will people say when they hear it? Come now. Be brave. I will lead you to your rooms. You must rest."

"Let me stay here, and you, my beloved King, don't leave me. Stay with your Queen, your misfortunate spouse for at least one hour. She wants to speak with you. Do not deny her this trifling request."

"My dear Sahanoush."

"Did you say 'My dear Sahanoush'? My God! Did you call me by that name? Are my ears playing tricks on me? You said 'dear', did you not? Oh how I am thrilled by that trivial, that poor word, that crumb of love. Why, Oh why has God made us so weak? And you, of course you are pitying me. Isn't that right. Tell me. Don't hide it from me. You are pitying me as if I were a beggar. Oh if only you knew how heavy that is for me, how infinitely insufferable!"

"And yet, dear Queen, you are exciting



yourself. You may hurt yourself that way. Come, let us go from here."

"Oh no. I cannot leave here now. I cannot leave my dear Ashot. Oh forgive me, let me call you by that name. I am all right now. I can speak now calmly. I am no longer excited. Only give me your hand and promise me that you will listen to me patiently."

The King extended his hand to her without saying a word. The Queen seized it and pressed it with trembling hands. Then she continued:

"Thank you. Do you see how easily I am satisfied? After losing the heart of my peerless hero, my august King, I am happy that I am permitted to grasp his cold, unresponsive hand. I can tell you this much. It is I, the proud Sahakanoush who is making this confession to her King. Oh why did I fall so low?"

The Queen again started to sob, and unable to restrain herself longer, she opened her arms and clung to the King.

"Sahanoush, dear Sahanoush," the King pressed her to his breast.

"Pray that I shall die this moment. I want to die in your arms. This is my only wish," the Queen murmured, choking with tears.

Deeply moved by the Queen's sobbings and tears the King hesitated, not knowing how to comfort the hapless woman. He pressed her more tenderly to his breast, feeling, as it were, that this was the only means of calming her. After a long pause, the King finally broke the silence: "Why did you get so excited, my dear?"

Although the King spoke very tenderly, almost in a whisper, nevertheless his words sounded crude to the Queen's ears who suddenly disengaged herself from his embrace.

"You ask me why I am so disturbed. Don't you know why? Have not my tears told you everything?"

The King said nothing for fear of agitat-

ing her further. He walked to the ledge, sat down on a boulder and began to gaze at the shore.

"Don't you want to listen to me any more?" the Queen asked in a broken voice.

"Speak, my dear, whatever you like, but don't remind me of the past."

"I will not remind you of anything," the Queen hastened to reassure, as if content with the King's request in which she saw an admission of his guilt. She sat down beside him on the rock.

"It is some months now, dear King, that I have the courage to speak openly. I only beg of you not to interrupt me even if what I say is unpleasant to you."

"Speak, I am listening."

"While in Garni I thought I was reconciled to my fate, therefore I decided to forget my personal plight and to dedicate myself to the common cause. The only way I could accomplish this was to join you, to comfort you in the face of your misfortunes, the desertion of your princes, and to urge you to return to Vostan, your throne and the court. After that it would be easy to resume the broken thread. The people and the troops awaited you. You could take advantage of their assistance.

"Animated by these thoughts I came to Kakhavaberd, but your cold reception of me grieved me. You thought I had come over to taunt you for your defeat by Tzlik Amram, and your suspicion of me was enough to upset me and renew my old wounds. Your cold indifference toward me intensified the fire of jealousy which was raging in my heart. So, I wanted to impress you by deliberately hurting you. I told the people that the whole world knew about your guilty love affair, how the people and the army have risen against you, how the princely families have turned their faces from you, and how the clergy has condemned your conduct. I thought I

could bring you to your senses by these disclosures, but, alas, I was badly mistaken. I confess that I acted like a feeble woman, one who is dictated by love. I could not bear your chilling indifference and forgot my vow and my original aim which kept ruthlessly gnawing at my heart. The result of all this was that, instead of returning to Vostan, you left Kakhavaberd and came to Sevan in despair.

"I recognized my error, saw the result of my thoughtless behaviour, and was badly sorry, but it was already too late. The only way I could atone for my sin was to follow you, to endure your cold indifference, and to suffer. Oh, how many times I wanted to come to you, speak with you, confess my error and beg your forgiveness! And yet you always avoided me, would not meet me alone to hear my voice and to see my tears. Oh, if only you knew how much I have suffered.

"Months passed and yet I could not find a moment to be with you alone. But when the messenger brought the news of the capture and the massacre of Burakan I became frightened as if struck by a heavenly lightning, remembered my vow, and remembered my error. If it were not for my insane jealousy, I thought, Ashot would be seated on his throne now surrounded by his soldiers, the princes would rally around him, and he would take the field against the enemy. I was so distraught I was almost ready to drown myself in the lake. But I thought better of it, decided to see you alone and make a clean breast of it. This is how I came here tonight to disturb your solitude. Perhaps you are displeased with my persistency, but I had to do it because danger is close and further delay would be disastrous."

"What do you want of me?" the King asked.

"That you return to Vostan, sit on your throne, restore the luster of the court, rally

the princes, organize the army, meet the enemy in the open field and save the land from the present crisis."

"In short, you want Ashot the Iron to be king again."

"Yes, just as before."

"Your wish is good, but I cannot carry it out."

"Why?"

"The reasons are many."

"Tell me those reasons if you think I still don't know them."

The King did not reply. He was pensive, gazing at the lake.

"Is it possible that those reasons are stronger than Ashot the Iron's will?" the Queen prodded, wishing to appeal to his pride.

"The will of Ashot the Iron? How ironic! The will of Ashot the Iron is now like the reed which sways in the breeze."

"Why do you drive me to desperation, my Lord, my King?" the Queen murmured deeply moved.

"God forbid that I should cause you to despair. I am telling you the truth."

"But there was the time when you were strong like the lion of the jungle."

"Whose roar was the terror of the wild beasts," the King finished the sentence.

"Yes."

"And yet even the lion gets weak and dies."

"Of course. But that happens when he is ripe with age."

"But when the hunter's arrow pierces his heart?"

"Who is the invincible hunter who could give you such a blow?" The Queen's question was cryptic.

The King smiled sadly, merely moving his lips.

"Don't you want to speak?" The Queen was persistent.

"I do not want to hurt your heart," the King replied, gazing at the lake.

"My God!" exclaimed the Queen. "Are you still thinking about my heart? That really is too much. I will go mad from joy."

"Ah, yes indeed. There are truths which, no matter how bitter, nevertheless a man can hear and bear it patiently, but which no woman's ear can endure."

"Go ahead. Test my courage."

"Very well, Hear me then." The King faced the Queen and continued. "A little while ago you asked me who is the hunter who pierced the lion's heart so mortally. I will tell you who it is. (The Queen was listening tensely). That invincible hunter was the love of a woman."

"What woman?" the Queen suddenly interrupted.

"You see? You already have lost your courage," the King observed.

"Keep on, I won't interrupt you any more."

"We mortals, dear friend, are pitiful playthings in the hands of mighty nature," the King went on. "In vain men pass laws and ordain rules of conduct in order to control that which only nature can control. I am talking about the human heart. You love me, don't you?"

"Why do you ask that question?"

"Answer me. Do you love me, or not?"

"I love you boundlessly."

"Good. Now tell me, what can human laws avail against a love like that? Can they order you to cease loving me?"

"The laws, on the contrary, consecrate my love, because I love my lawful husband."

"That is a mere accident. What if you suddenly should love someone else?"

"Christian virtue, which I have always followed, would not permit me to think of an illicit love. And when a person does not think about a lawless deed he can never commit that lawlessness."

"To define a limit for thinking also is

impossible. What can the heart avail when nature dictates it to love someone who does not lawfully belong to him?"

"That is the same as saying: 'What can the thieves and bandits do when their hearts dictate them to steal and rob that which does not belong to them?' Can you justify the robber when your despoiled subject drags him before your justice?"

These words pierced the King's heart because the blow was aimed directly at the sore spot. He was silent for a few moments.

"Have you anything else to say?" the Queen gently asked.

"How not? I have plenty to say."

"Speak up then."

"Listen. Should the judge be biassed or unbiassed?"

"He should be unbiassed, of course."

"Should the thief be punished or rewarded?"

"He should be punished, of course."

"Why then do you wish to reward him when the impartial judge wants to punish him?"

"What do you mean? I don't understand."

"You don't understand? But I have spoken plainly."

"Who is the thief and who is the judge? For whom are you demanding a reward?" the Queen asked.

"I am that thief, and I myself, as the judge, have punished myself by renouncing the throne and seeking refuge in this wilderness. Why do you want to take me out of here and return me to Vostan?"

"You are exaggerating."

"Exaggerating? Never."

"You are exaggerating, my beloved King."

"Don't call me either beloved or King. I am a criminal cursed by God and men; why do you keep on loving me? Why do you think of restoring my glory?"

"I will love you always. Can you command me to forget my husband?"

"Your husband? Oh do not torture me. I cannot bear that insult."

"Do you think being loved by me is an insult?"

"No, Illustrious Queen. The insult lies in the fact that you should requite my disloyalty with such a boundless love. I am a proud man. I cannot bear the good which is being accorded me for the evil I have done."

"I have never received any evil from you."

"Such words cannot comfort me. I am not such a coward as not to bear the punishment commensurate with my crime. If you really wish to allay my pain, then hate me with all your might. Only your hatred, only the severity of the suffering can bring relief to my heart."

"I cannot hate you."

"Hate me, because I do not love you."

"Oh, don't say that."

"I cannot lie to you. I do not love you."

"You are cruel."

"The only woman in the world I love. . ."

"Oh please, do not give her name," the Queen almost shrieked.

"Yes, the only woman I love is Princess Asbram, the daughter of the Patriarch of Sevardis."

"You heartless . . . you cruel . . . Have you no pity for a forsaken woman? Was not I once your wife?"

"I want to cut up your heart, I want to engender an infernal hatred in you. That alone can soften my anguish."

"Never hope for it. I can never hate you. Do not torture your soul in vain. Tell me only what is your heaviest affliction and I will find a way to lighten it."

"So much the worse."

"Don't be stubborn, my beloved King. Each ailment has its cure, and each affliction its remedy. All that is needed is a

healing hand and a loving heart."

"Who, for example, can heal the soul which writhes from the pangs of conscience? Who can comfort the man who realizes the magnitude of his crime and yet is helpless to redress that crime?"

"All men are fallible in this world."

"And all men can be forgiven."

"Therefore, you too can be forgiven."

"Do not interrupt me. All can be forgiven except those who are called upon to direct the destinies of men, who are called upon to be the shepherd of the flock, to be an example of virtue, to watch over the welfare and the happiness of the people. I was a man of such responsibility. God ordained me as the head and the leader of this people. Was I true to my calling? Did I not scorn my sacred duty? Was I not the cause of countless evil? Who can forgive me? Why should I be forgiven?"

"You can gain nothing by remembering the past," the Queen interrupted. "Forget the past and try to improve the present."

"How can I forget the past?" the King exclaimed. "I would rob the stars of heaven to reward the man who could make me forget my past, the man who could find a way of blunting my memory. To forget? Yes, I want to; that is my only wish and desire. But who can convert that desire into reality? Oh, how happy I would be if I only could forget what is done. The memory of which gnaws at my heart like a devouring serpent and tortures my conscience. Can I forget that I ruined the home of Seveda, my good father-in-law, by blinding the father and the son at the same time? Can I forget how I ruined the home of Amram, my faithful ally, by converting his peaceful abode into hell? Can I forget that I poisoned your life, spurning your tender love, destroying your happiness? How many of these can I refuse to recollect? How many can I forget? Or perhaps forget that, by my evil conduct

I alienated my princes and destroyed their unity, or that, by inciting Amram's rebellion I lost the northern provinces, or, lastly, that by weakening my military forces I enabled the Arab to entrench himself in the heart of my country? Tell me, my beloved, how many of these shall I forget? How many of them shall I refuse to remember? How can I forget that all these came about because of my guilty love, my single departure from the path of virtue?

"No, I am not worthy of forgiveness. Don't try to make me forget my sinful past. I am a Christian, I have a conscience, and that conscience is torturing me. Its voice is dinning the voice which my soul should hear. It commands me to run away from the royal throne, from its glory and splendour, and to retire into the wilderness, to weep alone and to atone for my sins.

"And now I am here, in Sevan, my purgatory. In vain you think I left Kakhavaberd because you, embittered by my indifference, divulged to the world that the people, the princes and the clergy have deserted me because of my guilty love. I ran away from Kakhavaberd because despair chased me out. As to my heart, my conscience? If my conscience were easy, if my deeds were righteous, not even the might of the whole world could have vanquished my soul. But this thing we call conscience, I could not fight against it. It was too much for me. On top of this, I could not stand your accusing eyes, your sad, grief-stricken face, your disconsolate soul. I was running away from you, yes, not because I hated you, but because every time I saw you my heart was shattered, My shame and my conscience persecuted me.

"Finally I came here to hide my grief and to weep over my crimes. I thought this would make you leave me and you would go to Vostan where you still have many faithful followers. But you disappointed me. You followed me like a faithful spouse

and you proved for the hundredth time that I was not worthy of your love, that fate had in vain tied us together.

"Realizing all this, dear Madam, it is impossible for me to reenter the world from which my conscience chased me out. Leave me in my purgatory. Perchance I may be able to atone for my sins, perchance I may be able to save my soul from hell."

"Don't you think God would be more pleased if you atoned for your sins by doing good unto others?" the Queen asked.

"How not? That would be more pleasing to Him, because it is better to do good than to shed futile tears."

"Well then, return to your throne, take the helm of the government and save your people from the imminent dangers."

"I must do that as King, is it not so?"

"Of course."

"But I no longer consider myself worthy of the throne of Ashot the First and virtuous Sembat. Sevan is my worthy place. Here I shall live and here I shall die."

"And the royal throne?"

"Let Abbas be king, he is my legal heir."

These words struck the Queen like a bolt. It was the first time she had heard anything like it. True, she often had pondered over the loss of her love but she had never given any thought to losing her queenship. If Abbas became king then Gourgendoukht would be queen, and proud Sahakanoush would be reduced to the stature of a common subject, confined in the seclusion of Sevan. She would be the slave of the daughter of Abkhaz, to watch from a distance the homage and the adoration which the subjects showered on the new queen.

This was too much for the proud daughter of Sevada. Caught in the clutches of woman's ambition on the one hand, and the vanity of the rival on the other, she even forgot her personal affliction, the sense of humiliation subordinated the in-



tense love in her, with typical woman's perspicacity she at once weighed the abysmal rift between her internal grief and the external humiliation, and was convinced that it was better to endure all manner of suffering inwardly than to submit to open degradation.

"No, my Illustrious King, you shall never go through with this decision. You shall not remain in Sevan. The people and the throne are waiting for you. You shall return to Vostan," the Queen said with positive finality.

"That is impossible. To do that I must first wrench my heart from my breast, and my brain from my head. With this heart and brain I can never ascend the throne."

"No. You will take pity on your people which just now is like a flock without a shepherd, scattered in the four corners of the wilderness, persecuted on all sides by wolves. The mewing of the mothers and the lambs is dinning the valleys."

"Abbas will gather that flock. He will be a better shepherd than I am."

"Don't say it, please. Don't give the name of Abbas. The King of the Armenians is still alive."

"No. He has been dead long since. He died the day when he shamelessly ran away from Tzlik Amram."

"Don't say those words. Don't remember the past, I beseech you." The Queen grasped the King's hand and looking in his eyes which were staring at the moon, softly murmured: "Ashot, my Illustrious King, my beloved spouse, I beseech you. Don't let the daughter of Abkhaz mock the pride of your Sahakanoush. Let the Queen of the Armenians die like a queen."

"Ah, how little you know of my anguish!" the King moaned, turning his face to the lake.

"Speak. If you have other troubles, open your heart to me."

The King was silent. He kept staring at the lake. And indeed, how could he answer? How could he unveil his heart? How could he unfold the heaviest pang of all which lay hidden behind that veil? Could he confess that he still was thinking of the Princess of Sevada, the hapless victim of his illicit love; that he was familiar with her family misfortune; that each moment he could hear the curse of her weeping heart, her heart-wringing sobs? How could he return to his former throne, resume the life of luxury, glory and success, with her mournful sobbings ringing in his ears each moment. How could he watch her tears and yet say to himself: "The whole world is singing my praises, my return is being crowned with frantic acclamation, there is exultation all around me, joy and dancing, and yonder, in the mountains of Sevordis, in the dark recesses of Tavoush, there is a shattered heart, forsaken and alone, cut off from the world, whose only companion is her humiliation and disgrace. What right have I to return to a life of glory, to enjoy the benefits of life while the woman who has given her all to me lives in oblivion?"

These thoughts which had been torturing the King for a long time, so shook him at the moment that, forgetting himself, he exclaimed: "No. It is impossible. I cannot live when she dies."

"Who are you talking about? Who is dying?" the Queen asked bewildered.

The King was shaken. Rising to his feet he extended his hand to the Queen. "Let's go, the moon is sinking," he said imperiously.

"But who were you talking about?" the Queen repeated the question.

"About the one who dies in obscurity," the King said abruptly as he led the way.

The Queen followed him, no longer daring to speak.

*(To be continued)*

# BOOKS AND AUTHORS

H. Kurdian, Reviewing Editor

**THE TRAVELS OF IBN JUBAYAR.** *Translated and edited by R. J. Broadhurst. Cloth, octavo, pp. 430, and a folding map of the travels. London, 1952, \$5.88.*

This work, highly interesting in content, with an excellent translation and good print, has little which bears directly on the Armenians, nevertheless it is important for any one who is interested in Armenian history embracing the particular period.

Abu'l Husseyn Muhammed ibn Ahmad ibn Jubayar was a Spanish Moor born in Valencia in 1145 A.D. to a good Moorish family in that city. A devoted Muslim and a good clerk, he decided to go on a pilgrimage to Mecca and, accompanied by a Muslim Granada physician, he started on his long journey on Feb. 3, 1183 A.D. Sailing on a Genoese ship as far as Egypt, he went by land up the Nile, and crossing the Red Sea he traveled to Mecca, Medina, Baghdad, Mousoul, Harran, Aleppo and Damascus, all the while avoiding the territories held by the Crusaders until he had to cross from Banyas via Crusade held land to the seaport of Acre, from which point he took a Genoese ship and finally arrived back in Spain on April 25, 1185.

Ibn Jubayar is a good observer and his information highly valuable. He did not visit Cilicia where Prince Ruben the Second was reigning at the time. However, he mentions that the Lord of Darub (Cilician Gates) of Armenia was Emir Mas'ad and his daughter had come to Mecca on a pilgrimage.

He gives a valuable description of such important cities as Aleppo, Damascus, Nisibin (Mtzbin of the Armenians), Acre and many others, with their lands, the people, the economy, the culture etc. This information will be useful in the re-writing of the history of Armenians of Cilicia. He also supplies valuable information on the Crusades, their lords, their deeds, about the various Seljuk rulers and about Saladdin.

In pages 367-389, the translator Broadhurst's notes ably clear up many dark passages in the book. Pp. 391-399 contain the essential Glossary; pp. 401-427 Indices of persons and places. A list appended at the end of the work gives the western forms of proper names which occur in the book.

Thus, we have another translation of an Arabic text added to the slowly growing list of English Orientalia dealing with the Near East.

**AS I REMEMBER.** *An autobiography of Dr. Edgar J. Goodspeed. Cloth, octavo, pp. 316. New York, 1953. Price \$3.50.*

With this his autobiography, the eminent author makes an addition to the material of Americana, the history of the University of Chicago, and to the history of the Bible translation, as well as the Revised Standard Version of the Bible.

The book reads interestingly. Of particular interest to me, however, was chapter fourteen entitled "Finding a Byzantine Art Gallery," in which the author describes the way the famous Byzantine illuminated manuscript, now at the University of Chicago and known as the Rockefeller McCormick New Testament, was discovered, purchased, and brought to the States from Paris.

The Fifteenth Chapter is devoted to "Manuscript Hunting" for the University collection. It contains the amusing story of the elderly Armenian in Chicago who invited Drs. Goodspeed and Willoughby to a dinner and showed them a copy of Armenian Four Gospels for which he asked a sum of \$75,000. This of course reminded me of my many similar experiences in hunting old manuscripts. This attitude of asking fabulous sums for ordinary Armenian manuscripts is really tragic sometimes, particularly when the ignorant owner is adamant, the result being that the manuscript remains unpurchased and becomes exposed to natural or human destruction, if not totally lost for research students. In this chapter Dr. Goodspeed kindly mentions me and my collection of Armenian manuscripts in connection with the 11th century Byzantine Four Gospels which he purchased from me for about what I had paid when at the time of my purchase I knew of its antiquity and that it was easily worth several thousand dollars. Dr. Goodspeed somehow has forgotten to make this point clear in his story.

The University of Chicago at present has about ten Armenian New Testament manuscripts carefully selected by my good friends, Dr. Ernest Cadman Colwell, former President of the University, and Dr. Allen Wikgren.

An index at the end of the work renders it usable for the hurried researcher. Dr. Goodspeed's autobiography, written with such candor, is well worth reading.

★ ★ ★  
**BYZANTINE PAINTING.** *Historical and critical study by Andre Grabar. Cloth, quarto, 200*

pp. and 105 full color and gold plates. Printed in Switzerland and published by Albert Skira. 1953. price \$20.00.

A gloriously monumental work that could be considered so far the master piece of the Skira published series of "The great centuries of painting".

The work contains studies and beautiful color plates of fifth and sixth century mosaics of Salonika, Ravenna, Constantinople (the pavement in the great palace), mosaics and frescos of Rome, the murals of Castelseprio. The mosaics of the Middle Ages from Constantinople (St. Sophia), Chios (Nea Moni), Daphny, Torcello, Venice (St. Marco), Sicily (The Cathedral, Cefalu and The Palatine Chapel, Palermo), Constantinople (The church of Kahrieh Djami). To this is added Frescoes of the Balkans, that is of Greece, Mistra, Yugoslavia. Finally we see painting in books, on icons, enamel.

However as the above list shows the publishers have concentrated particularly on western or European Byzantine empire paintings and mosaics. Asia Minor has been entirely omitted.

Mr. Grabar seems to have his own opinion as to what Byzantine is. He applies the term to "the Christian State which lasted from 330 to 1453," (p.11). That is, from the year when Constantine the Great moved his capital there until that capital was overrun by the Turks in 1453. This seems reasonable to us altho somehow the art of the empire influenced and lingered in the city as well as in its former lands gradually losing its earlier standards.

Mr. Grabar agrees with most Byzantologists that Byzantine culture could not be defined only to the limits of Byzantium-Constantinople. No doubt Byzantine art during the first few centuries of the formation of that Empire was a composition of arts of earlier centers in and near the confines of that new and vigorous empire. Like the Arabic Empire with its Baghdad, Byzantine Empire also composed art that was not its own spontaneous creation but the eventual harmonization and incorporation of various local and national styles blended in a form that we could now define as Byzantine, or as in the case of the Arab Empire, Arabic.

In Byzantine Empires' art naturally the western (Roman and Greek) arts had to be blended with the Eastern (Alexandrian, Anthioch, Persian and even Chinese) arts. Mr. Grabar however prefers to include in his concept of Byzantine art the works of Adriatic and Tyrrhenian littorals, because he says, "the many Levantines who had settled there and even the Latins, were in too frequent contact with the *pars orientalis* of the Empire," and he believes they should be included while he excludes various works of painting and mosaic in Asia Minor, Syria and Egypt because he considers them as Greek works and so called Byzantine culture; "throughout its course was nourished by the traditions and activities of the Greek communities resident in the East-Mediterranean area." (p. 12). Could they be named "Greek communities" or should they be named

"Christian communities"? Whatever the name the fact is that the art in Asia Minor, Syria or Egypt had to a great extent lost its "Greek" character during the Christian era that falls parallel to Byzantine Empire. There could not be any question that this eastern art was the greatest factor in the formation of Byzantine art as its elements spread to the western lands as Mr. Grabar so plainly admits. To make it short, Mr. Grabar himself admits that his concept "Faulty though it may be, this method has history to support it" (p.13) But the history Mr. Grabar uses to support this his method somehow doesn't seem very convincing to us.

Mr. Grabar divides Byzantine art to two periods; one that brings us down to the ninth century; and the second, that begins with the ninth century. Thus he ably carries the subject, enlightening his readers with historic, athletic and critical studies. Of course, as always, the nature of such studies is open to question. Nevertheless the work is extremely interesting, and Mr. Grabar with his outstanding knowledge and ability on the subject has achieved great success in its presentation.

The work is devoted predominantly to mosaics and to some extent to paintings, but the manuscripts and miniatures have remained secondary, while the famed Byzantine icons and enamels receive "honorable mention" only with very few examples.

The glorious volume ends with a bibliography, Index of names and subjects (Armenia is mentioned three times, pp. 18, 106, which should be 102 as there is no mention on 106 of Armenia and 155). Then comes the list of the colorplates and of contents.

★ ★ ★

#### FRIENDS OF ARMENIAN CULTURE OF CAIRO, EGYPT

It seems to me that all I can do is to brag about the splendid achievements of this fine group of Armenians in Cairo. Somehow this does not seem right to me. I had hoped that the Armenians of such centralized locations as Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Detroit and Fresno would be chagrined for not emulating the example of their kinsmen of Cairo. What logical reason can be extended for not having an Armenian Cultural organization in the United States, the richest country in the world, and yes, comparatively speaking, with an Armenian community which is better off economically than any of our communities in the Dispersion? An organization which can stage exhibits of Armenian arts, the creations of ancient and contemporary masters, in architecture, painting, craftsmanship, in short the product of our cultural heritage.

Information from Cairo, direct from my friends of the Cultural Association, is that they soon will give an exhibition of the paintings of Shiltian of Italy, the internationally famous Armenian painter. They are also organizing an orchestral concert consisting of 50-60 Armenian musicians to present the compositions of Aram Khatchatourian, having for their soloist the piano virtuoso Z. Khatchatourian of Egypt, under the baton of Ohan Khatchatourian. This will be a

musical event which I hope I shall have the happiness of attending personally. Furthermore, my friends assure me that the proposed exhibition of Armenian architecture which was postponed last year, is being planned to give this year in Alexandria.

At the same time, I learn that my good and talented friend Onnig Avedisian has about completed his "History of Armenian Art," an interesting and well executed volume which covers the history of Armenian painting from its beginning to our times. This much needed work will be published with the funds of the "Friends of Armenian Culture" of Cairo.

This ambitious group is planning to produce a motion picture entitled "The Armenian Industry," about 1,000 feet long a film which I trust will also include the Kutahia pottery making in Jerusalem. In 1937 I took a pretty good movie of the subject in Jerusalem, preserving the art of pottery making as it was known in Kutahia. Finally, this association is organizing an exhibition of the works of Armenian painters in Egypt.

To top it all, Artashes Orak has completed a short study of "Zvartnotz," an Armenian architectural masterpiece, which will soon be published by the "Hamazgain Mushakuthayin" association of Cairo. I wonder if it would be too much to expect if some American Armenian of means volunteered to finance the English translation and publication of this work. Artashes Orak is also about to complete his "The History of Armenian Architecture." Let us hope that some patriotic wealthy Armenian will perpetuate his memory by financing the cost of this invaluable work. This would be one way of showing one's devotion to the ancient glorious culture of his nation.

Happy should be the Armenians of Cairo for the wealth of patriotic activity which they enjoy right at home.



#### "PIONEERS OF PROTESTANTISM IN ASIA MINOR"

Under the above title, in the last issue (Winter, 1953) of the ARMENIAN REVIEW, and signed, Marie Sarrafian Banker attempts to give us a sketchy history of her subject.

It is amusing to say the least that in this day and age, and particularly for one who reads and writes for such a publication as The Armenian Review, one could say that the Armenians could be "converted" to Christianity, that "Rev. and Mrs. Goodell had been prepared by the hand of God as chosen vessels to bear His name in this most religious city (Constantinople), which was yet without Christ" (p.86). There are any number of such remarks, wholly misleading, which give the impression that the lady, the writer of the above mentioned article, assumes that Armenians were not Christians or Christians enough, that they had to be "enlightened," "converted," "saved" for Christ and Christianity by the hands of "missionaries" from America, who should have stayed home and been busy saving the souls and converting to Christianity their own countrymen who, by the way, in those days were steeped in intolerance, busily engaged in slave trading,

things that the "bigotted" clergy of the Armenian church, the oldest, most venerable, and greatly respected in general, had not even heard of.

No, my lady, Christianity did not "spring up here and there" among the Armenians, nor did the Armenians need "to learn more about God's way of salvation" (p.87) from "missionaries" in the beginning of 19th century, No. The Armenians WERE the Christians when the world was odd and strange for the rest of the world. Armenians REMAINED Christians when the rest of the world had lost the real meaning of the word. The most "unenlighted" Armenian of the time could have given Christian, real honest to goodness Christian education to the best of the "missionaries" who were plaguing his poor tortured life.

We Armenians are grateful for the educational enlightenment that Missionaries brought to our land. But OUR Christianity . . . well let's leave that alone. It is second to none.

The article is written without any show of source. However it is evident that Dr. Hamlin's book "Among the Turks" (London, 1878) has been used primarily, without being mentioned as the source. The article is more of a biographical sketch of Dr. Hamlin whose reputation and importance without any doubt is more of an educator than a missionary among the Armenians and the people of Near East who have been benefited from the Robert College established by him.

Among the "Pioneers of Protestantism" the author does not mention some very important persons such as Parsons, Fisk, King, Gridley, Josiah Brewer who by the way went to Constantinople in 1827 and published a very interesting book "A residence at Constantinople in the year 1827" (published in New Haven, 1830). Brewer was a real missionary as he was interested in converting the Jews to Christianity and not the already GOOD Christian Armenians to "protestantism."

It is a gross injustice to the high reputation of Mesrob Talliatian to represent him as a convert to "protestantism." He remained faithful to his native church of Etchmiadzin to the end and loved to represent his name as "sarkavag" of the Church of Etchmiadzin, that is the title of humblest class of the Armenian church organization.

In one place, speaking of the escape of Mesrob Talliatian from Constantinople, the writer states: "Many years later Dr. Hamlin had the great privilege of informing them that their victim was in the East and that he (Talliatian) had become an editor of an Evangelical Armenian paper, working for the salvation of his dearly beloved people." (p.90). This indeed is a gross misrepresentation. Talliatian after his escape from Constantinople went to Calcutta where an Armenian PATRIOTIC organization was engaged with devotion in publishing Armenian PATRIOTIC books, also a periodical AZQUASER ARARATIAN (1845-1847) entirely devoted to the cause of Armenian patriotism as the title of the periodical itself plainly indicates — AZQUASER ARARATIAN, that is, PATRIOT OF ARARAT which was far, VERY FAR from being an "Evangelical Armenian paper" altho very much "working for the salvation of his dearly beloved people" but



not in the same sense as the Lady writer insinuates.

While we are on the subject of "missionaries" in Armenia, I believe a very important work has been neglected. That work will be a careful and complete history of Americans among Armenians or in Armenia. This work no doubt could be one of the most interesting subjects and it is open to any American Armenian writer of which we have a good number at the present time. Let us hope that one of them will have courage enough to tackle the job.

★ ★ ★

#### AN ANSWER TO THE EDITORS OF "THE VOICE OF FREE GEORGIA"

Since the appearance of my article entitled "Armeno-Georgian Cultural Relations of the Past" in the *Armenian Review* (1953, Vol. 6, No. 2, p. 22) a number of articles have been written by Armenians and Georgians in an effort to refute, correct, or to record objections to the facts and views presented in it.

The Armenians in no uncertain terms have accused me of being pro-Georgian, and conversely, the Georgians have lambasted me for being pro-Armenian. Nor have they done this with kid gloves. However, perhaps the most scientific of them all was the long article signed by Dr. G. Magalashvili in "United Caucasus" (No. 127, Munich, 1953). This article will be answered exhaustively later. Dr. Magalashvili's article will necessitate additional research study and therefore a detailed answer cannot be ready any earlier than the next issue of the *Armenian Review*. Meanwhile, his article has been reprinted in a New York Georgian organ called "The Voice of Free Georgia" (No. 4, pp. 12-21) in which the editors have found it necessary to supplement two additional pages of their own comments taking exception with my statements and views as offensive to the Georgian people or history, grievances which, any reader can readily see, did not exist in my article except in the minds of the editors. That I should have any desire to suggest in my article any idea which may be derogatory to the national honor of the Georgian people I vehemently and categorically disown. By their assumptions, deductions, and untrue references the Editors of the *Free Voice* have done a disservice to the amicable relations of the Georgian and Armenian sister nations. It would have been far more discreet on their part to have been satisfied with the reprinting of Dr. Magalashvili's article, without the gratis imposition of their own views. Naturally, I have no desire to answer two pages of fantastic charges, unsupported by sources and footnotes, ahead of Dr. Magalashvili's serious article.

However, just to prove what I mean, I shall take the liberty of quoting one paragraph from the Editors' comments which refers to Koriun and St. Mashtotz.

"Mr. Kurdian relies on an Armenian source, namely the chronicles of Koriun, but he fails to mention that the latest studies of Koriun by qualified historians show that the part of the *Chronicles* which deals with the invention of the Georgian alphabet was not written by Koriun

at all but was added much later by some anonymous scribe or commentator. But even if it had been written by Koriun himself, it would still have been quite untrustworthy and unacceptable. The *Chronicles* say that Saint Mesrop travelled in Georgia and, as he did not know the Georgian language, he composed the Georgian alphabet with the aid of an interpreter. Even if we had no other proof whatsoever, this statement alone would amply be sufficient to enable us to say quite positively that the whole story is nothing but a fable." (p. 10)

First of all, Koriun did not write any chronicles as the Editors erroneously state a number of times. Koriun's work in question is known as *VAR K MASHTOTZI*, which means, "The acts, the deeds, the works, the activity and the behaviour of Mashtotz." Koriun was one of the students of Mashtotz, a devoted pupil who worked with his master, was an eye witness of his great deeds, saw him at work, die, and become enshrined.

Koriun's work "Vark Mashtotzi" is the product of his pen; no other hand has adulterated its solid, clear and concise language. No addition has been made by other hands. Very few omissions and simple manuscript errata only are the present defects in the text which has come down to us.

The "qualified historians" who according to the Editors have shown that "the part of the *Chronicles* which deals with the invention of the Georgian alphabet was not written by Koriun," etc. is a very poor fabrication, for no one, NO ONE with a knowledge of the Armenian language could make such a statement. The Editors do not even mention one single "qualified historian."

Today, more than ever, there is not the slightest doubt about the authenticity of Koriun's *VAR K MASHTOTZI*, which was written in 443-4 and no doubt about it. Not long ago I published an article in the *HAIRENIK MONTHLY* in which the date of Koriun's work was examined at length. I hope this is clear to the Editors.

Now a few words about the discovery of the Georgian alphabet by St. Mesrop Mashtotz. Here is what Koriun says who is the only authentic witness and source of the invention of the Georgian alphabet. (See *VAR K MASHTOTZI*, chapter XIII).

"Once again, after a time, the Beloved of Christ (Mashtotz) was preoccupied with the condition of barbarian parts of the land (those areas which were without christian education). And he prepared symbols of the Georgian language according to his ability invested by the Lord. He put into writing, rearranged, and set to rules, and having taken with him a few of his pupils, he travelled to the land of the Georgians. And having arrived there, he presented himself to the King whose name was Bakur, and the Bishop of the land whose name was Moses. And, in conformity with the law of God, the King and the soldiers, together with all the provinces of the land, and even more so, submitted to his word.

"And he, putting his art into practice, coun-



selled them, and exhorted them, wherein every one volunteered to do his bidding. And he found a man who was proficient in the Georgian language to act as interpreter whose name was Tchala, an erudite and devout man in the faith; whereupon the Georgian king commanded that they assemble the children of the heterogeneous multitude of the provinces of the realm and of other parts and turn them over to the teacher (Mashtotz). The which he took and cast them into the crucible of his teaching, and with beatific zeal and affection he so contrived to cast off the corrupted dirt and the filth which clung to the demons and their false religion, and to repel the same far away from the fatherland and to render the memory thereof forgotten, so much so that they would say: "I forgot my people and my father's house."

"And this multitude which had assembled from so many special or divided tongues, he organized them into one nation by a single oracle of God, and fashioned of them the extollers of the only God, some of whom — including my unworthy self — were elevated to the exalted rank of Bishop, the first of whom by the name of Samuel, a holy and devout man, became bishop of the royal house.

"And when he had set the task of godliness in all parts of the land of the Georgian into order, thereupon he took his departure of them and returned to the land of the Armenians, and having called on Sahak, Catholicos of the Armenians, he told him the whole story, and together they gave glory unto God and the grand name of Christ."

Nowhere does Koriun ever say that St. Mesrop Mashtotz *did not know the Georgian language* as the Editors have stated and underlined in their statement. From Koriun's statement it can clearly be seen that Mashtotz already was *worried* and was working, or *arranging the forms of the alphabet of the Georgian language BEFORE* he went to Georgia. Koriun very plainly says that Mashtotz *wrote, arranged and shaped according to the rules* the Georgian alphabet. The rules were the classification of the alphabets according to their phonetic value, the shaping of the letters, etc. in which Mashtotz had spent his lifetime studying and traveling all over the then known civilized world, Byzantium, Samosat, etc.

It is true that Koriun writes with a style which was accepted in those days, which was to show always that divine guidance was the principal means of successful accomplishment. This should be easily understood and accepted without trying to obscure what it actually means; that was just an accepted form and nothing else.

Thus, if there are "fables," one can plainly see that they are not Koriun's but are the product of the imagination of the Editors of *The Voice of Free Georgia*.

#### ★ A CORRECTION ★

In the Winter, 1953, issue of THE ARMENIAN REVIEW, (page 138, under "Armenian Life Abroad"), the title of the new Van Compatriotic Association publication is carried as "Kantegh." The new publication is rather titled "Varak." The error was made on faulty information reaching the editors.



## BOOKS IN ENGLISH

"THE HISTORY OF THE ARMENIAN PEOPLE"	5.00
By Jacques De Morgan 1948 Cloth Bound 428 Pages	
"ST. VARTAN — HERO OF ARMENIA" by Marie Sarrafian	
Banker — The Story of Armenians Early Struggle for Freedom to Worship Christ, 1950 Exposition Press. 164 Pages - Cloth Bound	3.00
"THREE WORLDS" Hairenik Weekly Anthology, 1936—1939. Cloth bound. 305 Pages.	2.00
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